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FROM WASHINGTON

People's Choice

A really big, really successful March on Washington is always preceded by a characteristic rumble. The rumble, which becomes increasingly audible in the week before the march, consists of millions of conversations and telephone calls. Quite suddenly, people are asking each other if they're going to go, telling each other they've decided to go, urging each other to go, and calling around to make arrangements for travel, kids, dogs and cats, and places to stay. It's an agreeable sound, this rumble, because it announces a break in routine, an adventure in serious citizenship, and the imminence of a concrete experience of solidarity—the last, especially, being something our broad land of shopping malls and cable hookups rarely affords.

Last Sunday's march for abortion rights was heralded by the loudest rumble I'd heard since the Nixon years. The march itself was an extraordinarily impressive event. It was huge—300,000 people by the Park Police's estimate, double that by the organizers', but even the lower figure would mean that one out of every 800 Americans was present. And it was carried off with a calm dignity that was entirely appropriate to its political task, a task as delicate as the demonstration was massive. The great throng, perhaps two-thirds women and one-third men, moved down Constitution Avenue without jostling or excessive noise. In imitation of the suffragists of old, many tens of thousands had dressed all in white. Older men and women were surprisingly numerous (one of the most widely remarked-upon of the many hand-lettered signs read MENOPAUSAL WOMEN, NOSTALGIC FOR CHOICE); Betty Friedan marched with her daughter and newborn granddaughter, one of many intergenerational tableaux.

The marchers' task was delicate because abortion, unlike peace or civil rights, is not a positive good. The message the marchers sought to convey was therefore a rather complicated and sophisticated one. It was that while the decision to end a pregnancy by abortion is always in some sense an unhappy one, there are times when it is preferable to the alternative, and that in any case such a decision, especially in the early months of pregnancy, should properly be made by the woman concerned and not by the state. It's hard to get that on a bumper sticker or even a picket sign, though the National Abortion Rights Action League came close with the slightly ungrammatical slogan it adopted for the day: "Who Decides? You or Them?"

One young woman I talked with on the line of march surprised me by describing herself as anti-abortion. "What I mean by that is, I think abortion's wrong," she explained. "I don't think it's murder, but I do think it's the taking of life. I find it hard to imagine myself having an abortion. But I do have friends who've had them, and I don't condemn them or stand in judgment on them. They're not killers. It's horrible to say that. And it's horrible to think of the government forcing them. I just don't see any alternative to letting a woman decide for herself. So here I am." It may seem odd that an abortion rights march would attract people who are anti-abortion, but in this sense the "pro-choice" movement is more inclusive—more catholic, you might say—than its "pro-life" opposition.

Sunday's march was originally going to focus on the Equal Rights Amendment, a moribund cause that would have attracted a few tens of thousands of people. Then the Supreme Court agreed to hear a case that might result in the reversal of *Roe* v. *Wade*, the 1973 decision in which the Court declared abortion to be legal and protected by the constitutional right to privacy. The theme of the march was hastily changed, and the huge turnout astonished everyone. The marchers, of course, fervently hoped that *Roe* v. *Wade* will be affirmed. They do not want to have to expend their energies in a state-by-state war of attrition over an issue they had assumed was settled. But there is another group that shares their hope, or ought to: the Republican politicians who have made such skillful (and cynical) use of the passions of the "pro-life" movement.

For more than a decade the political stalemate over abortion has worked in the Republicans' favor. The bargain was simple. The "pro-life" activists gave the Republican Party votes, money, and legions of volunteers. In return, the party gave them an echo chamber for their views. President Reagan gave many

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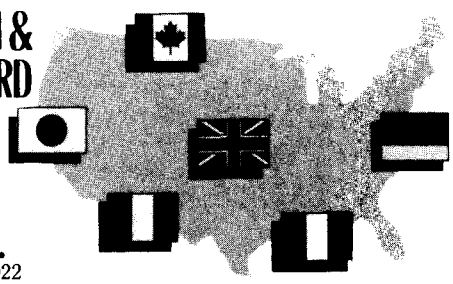

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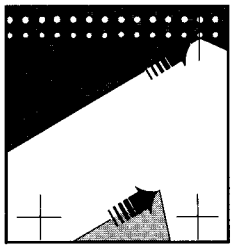

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CORRESPONDENCE

False Start

To the editors:

We agree that Congress should engage in the bold thinking that leads to big spending reductions as well as big increases ("Bring Back Big Spending," March 27). However, we must test bold ideas before fully implementing them; and since social and educational programs inevitably show incremental rather than total change, the proper test for them must be the size of the increments.

Research like the Perry Preschool study has already partially tested the idea of Head Start. Unfortunately, to make this study fit your point, you ignored the large differences it found between preschoolers and controls and cited only small ones. For the record, 17 percent of controls, but 49 percent of preschoolers, reached or surpassed a minimum fifth-grade level of achievement by age 14. In school, teachers classified 35 percent of controls as mentally retarded, but only 15 percent of preschoolers. Police at some time arrested 51 percent of controls, but only 31 percent of preschoolers. At age 19, 41 percent of controls, but only 19 percent of preschoolers, were on the welfare rolls.

Granted, most Head Start programs do not now achieve such results. But they could if they had better-paid, better-trained staff, a curriculum approach based on child-initiated learning, and a stronger emphasis on parent involvement. Fully funded to serve the nation's 1.6 million three- and four-year-olds living in poverty at $3,500 a child, Head Start would cost $5.7 billion a year. Though this amount is marginal on the grand scale of some federal expenditures, it is still five times what we now spend.

LAWRENCE J. SCHWEINHART
DAVID P. WEIKART
Directors, Perry Preschool Study
Ypsilanti, Michigan

The editors reply:

Perry wasn't a Head Start project. It was—as Schweinhart and Weikart acknowledge—a more elaborate and expensive effort at preschool education. And its encouraging results are easily exaggerated. For example, they cite the percentages of 19-year-olds who *admitted* receiving welfare when asked by an interviewer. We cited the percent who actually received welfare according to government records. Which statistic seems more reliable? Another example: yes, children who got preschool education had fewer arrests. But there was some evidence that when they were arrested it was for more serious offenses; the data on serious offenders, which we cited, show Perry making only a marginal difference. Even marginal improvements are desirable, but Head Start's supporters give the impression it will transform the underclass. It won't.

Capital Standards

To the editors:

Kathleen Day's "When Hell Sleazes Over" (March 20) provides a superb summary of how the S&L crisis developed. But James Glassman's proposed cure for the "moral hazard" problem created by federal deposit insurance—reducing the $100,000 ceiling and providing partial coverage for large deposits—would accomplish very little ("Moral Hazard").

As Glassman himself notes, federal policy-makers have already made clear on numerous occasions that in order to avoid potentially destabilizing runs, *all* depositors at large troubled banks and S&Ls—insured and uninsured—will be protected against loss. This is a fact of financial life that I suspect will never change. And because it won't, reducing the deposit insurance ceiling will provide no additional depositor discipline.

The only realistic way to provide greater discipline against excessive risk-taking by bank and thrift executives, therefore, is to enforce capital standards. More specifically, all depository institutions should be required to report their financial condition on the basis of market values rather than historical costs. And regulators must be required by law to intervene *before* depositories become insolvent—that is, at some level of capital *above 0*—by forcing the shareholders to come up with additional capital. If this cannot be done, then regulators should auction off the depository or close it (in the event no one bids a positive price and is willing restore capital to prevailing standards).

If we had had such a system of sound capital regulation in place, backed up by a strong system of supervision, the thrift crisis would never have occurred.

ROBERT E. LITAN
Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution
Washington, D.C.

The Good, the Bald, and the Ugly

To the editors:

Unfortunately, an error found its way into Bruce Reed's fine piece on an impending invasion of the resort community of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, by racist Skinheads and confrontational counter-demonstrators ("Nazi Retreat," April 3). The two Skinhead groups named, the Brew City Skins and the Minneapolis Baldies, are not the neo-Nazi thugs portrayed in the article, but rather groups that identify themselves with the non-racist Skinhead movement. Members of these groups are often themselves the targets of the kind of Skinhead attack Reed chronicles.

Your readers should also take note that the figure of 400 neo-Nazis nationwide, which Reed correctly cites from a 1987 report by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, understates the number of members of organizations in the hate movement that, while not advertising themselves as Nazis, hold essentially similar views. Nevertheless, Reed's assertion that such groups regard recruitment of Skinheads as a way to replenish their declining ranks is entirely sound.

DAVID LOWE
New York, New York

Sober Up

To the editors:

Speaking of hypocrisy on the Tower nomination (TRB from Washington, "Tower Play," March 27), am I the only person in America who found it amusing to watch Bob "Mean Streak" Dole defend civility on the floor of the U.S. Senate? Or to see confrontational commentators like Pat Buchanan and Robert Novak do the same in the media?

But leaving aside charges and countercharges of hypocrisy, I'm disappointed to find my favorite political magazine ignoring the crucial, fundamental issue: In a launch-on-warning world, is it really too much to ask that the secretary of defense be sober 24 hours a day? Can we afford to rely on TRB's dubious supposition that "experienced drinkers know how to sober up when they need to"? I don't think so. I'm glad Tower lost. And in spite of the self-serving rhetoric from conservatives about Sam Nunn's "Piety Party," I'm glad Nunn made an issue of Tower's excessive drinking.

RICH LOHMEYER
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
MAY 1, 1989

PEACE OFFERING

It cannot exactly be said that Yitzhak Shamir satisfied Israel's critics with what he brought on his trip to Washington. But it cannot be said that he came empty-handed, either. Indeed, Shamir's proposal that the population in the West Bank and Gaza elect a leadership from its own ranks that would negotiate with Israel over the short- and long-term status of the occupied territories is a tangible acknowledgment by the Likud of the political rights of the Palestinian Arabs. And it implies much more by way of concrete concessions to the Palestinians than did Yasir Arafat's much touted but constricted words at Stockholm and Geneva imply true compromise with Israel. If the Palestinians (and their friends) do not pick up this proposal and run with it, they will have only themselves to blame when a year from now—or five—their national movement is still being expressed in the desperate vernacular of riot and random terror.

At least one important friend of the PLO seems to recognize this reality. In a perhaps significant repositioning column in the *New York Times* (April 9), Anthony Lewis, who has generally been reflexively harsh on Shamir and gullibly soft on Arafat, argues that an election should be seen by the Palestinians "in terms of its possibilities." He is right; Shamir's rather chintzy view of where elections might lead would inevitably be expanded through the dynamics of a political process, particularly if that process enlarged—even if only incrementally—the dimensions of trust among participants. Indeed, had the Palestinians been permitted by their intransigent exile armies to explore and enlarge the opportunities opened for them more than a decade ago by the Camp David agreement, they would already be experiencing much of the self-determination to which they say they aspire. But then the history of Palestinian nationalism, from its first stirrings in the 1920s, has always been a history of lost opportunities.

True to form, the PLO and Palestinian leaders of the *intifada* immediately dismissed Shamir's proposal. But this need not be a final position. The PLO, like Israel, is subject to the pressure of world opinion, and Shamir's proposal should be the occasion for finally making that pressure more symmetrical.

Meanwhile, though, the Palestinians are so euphoric that they believe—or at least their leaders pretend to believe—that Israel will soon be coerced into negotiating with the PLO for the prompt establishment of an independent Palestine with its capital in Jerusalem. But the truth is that Israel will be stampeded into no such agreements; it still holds the cards. That is, it has the power on the ground. This hardheadedness will disappoint many outsiders, not least some American Jews who can't bear the sight of Israel's sometimes deploying

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its power in a morally ambiguous manner. Outsiders of all stripes are prone to be impatient with Israel for resisting the formulae for peace that look so good on paper: an Israeli flag here, why not a Palestinian flag there? But Shamir rightly reminded official Washington last week that while "our two nations share the values and ideals of the free world, what we do not share is a neighborhood. For us, the carnage in Beirut, the use of poison gas against civilians and acts of terrorism and fanaticism are not news from afar. For us they are events happening around the corner. If there is one mistake Israel cannot afford to make, it is the mistake of forgetting where we live."

This may be tiresome, but that doesn't make it wrong. Israel has reason to be skeptical. The PLO's chieftains persist in assuring the Arab masses that their ultimate intention remains the liberation of all of Palestine, which is to say all of even pre-1967 Israel. And they do this not in stray and fugitive comments but consistently and systematically. In any case, those interlocutors who are, despite this, so enthusiastic about "the new PLO" were not much vexed by the old PLO.

What all of this means is that Israel cannot be expected to proceed other than slowly when dealing in the concrete coinage of functional autonomy and territory. That was the genius of Camp David. It provided for time (five years) for the Israelis and the Palestinians (not to mention the Arab states, whose room for mischief remains large) to test each other before they were to decide together on the final design of a settlement. This interim period of circumscribed autonomy was one of the concessions Israel received in exchange for restoring the entire Sinai to Egypt. But now the Sinai is back in Egyptian hands and this concession has still not been delivered to Israel; the interim period was aborted, and now Israel is being asked to skip it and leap blindly into a fundamentally new and irreversible geopolitical arrangement. It would ill-become the United States, the sole sponsor of the Camp David project, to withdraw or even to mute its support for this most critical provision of the one treaty achieved between an Arab sovereignty and Israel. This, frankly, is a matter of trust not so much between Israel and the Arabs as between Israel and the United States. Israel will be more forthcoming if it knows that in American minds, at least, a treaty is truly a treaty. This idea, it has to be remembered, is not exactly axiomatic among the Arabs.

Elections for an indigenous leadership provide the greatest assurance that there will be on the Palestinian side of a negotiating table people with grievances and practical concerns that require the Israelis to yield power and authority. The Israelis will have to be pushed on some of these issues by the United States, perhaps quite forcefully. But there is no risk for the Palestinian people that the inevitably pro-PLO folk who will be elected will be uninterested in the matter of sovereignty. That is, to be sure, what upsets Shamir and the "revisionist," ultra-right wing of Zionism, both ideologically and pragmatically. But no Israelis have a normative stake in the occupation as it now must be maintained. It is taxing and demoralizing. Everyone, then, has some interest in a reality vastly different than the one that now exists.

The Israelis committed themselves at Camp David to the notion that this reality will include "the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and their just requirements." Groping toward that day could take up the better part of a decade. In the meantime, the unhappy life of the Palestinians should be massively eased, which could be an early effect of the sort of elections Shamir envisions.

It is not hard to discern over the barrier of years the outlines of a reasonable future settlement. It was articulated, probably not inadvertently, by President Bush in his remarks to President Mubarak of Egypt and to Prime Minister Shamir. He was being tactfully heartening to both. To the Egyptian he said that the Israeli occupation would have to come to an end. To the Israeli he said that the United States remains opposed to a Palestinian state. Between these two statements, only superficially contradictory, lies the only feasible solution respectful of the needs of the two people who will one day—*insha'allah and borukh hashem*—live with it. Call it "enhanced autonomy" or "diminished sovereignty." Either way, it will be more than the Israelis now imagine and less than the Palestinians demand.

TUNDRA PLUNDER

Along with the Exxon Valdez, proposals in Congress to allow oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) have run aground. Public outrage over the tanker's hemorrhage has subdued legislators who had hoped to open the 1.5 million acres of Alaska's northeastern coastal plain to exploration. But you can expect the idea to resurface after the oil sinks to the bottom. For that reason, it's important to remember that the Valdez incident—indeed, environmentalism in general—is not the sole justification for adding the ANWR to the National Wilderness Preservation System. Leaving aside moving evocations of cuddly caribou and springtime on the tundra (we'll get to those in a minute), common sense and a farsighted view of the national interest argue in favor of placing the ANWR off limits.

Proponents of leasing the ANWR find their rationale in "national security" (i.e., reducing our dependence on foreign oil) and in a report issued by the Department of the Interior under Donald Hodel. The report (which was criticized by both the Environmental Protection Agency and the Congressional Research Service) said that, assuming oil prices of $40 per barrel, drillers in the ANWR would stand a 1-in-5 chance of striking oil that they could profitably extract.

Of course, oil isn't selling at anywhere near that much, which means that the chances of profitable extraction are probably slim. But that's largely beside the point. The point, really, is that oil in some sense *should be* selling for closer to $40 per barrel, and probably will be someday. And this fact turns out to undermine the logic behind drilling in the ANWR.

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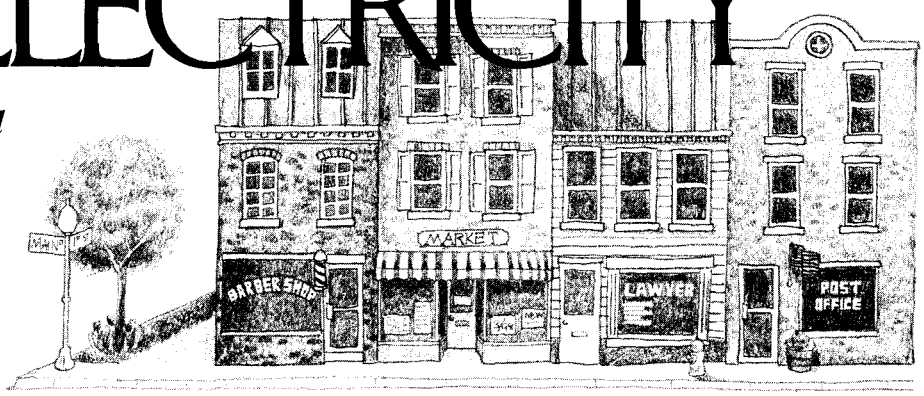
Rural Electrification

GENERATING MORE THAN ELECTRICITY

By Bob Bergland



I'm an optimist about people power.

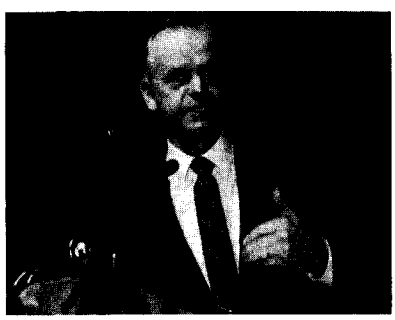
Maybe that's because I see so many people in rural communities—areas often left behind while the rest of the country prospers—harnessing their can-do spirit to pump new life into their local economy.

In one area of west Texas, for example, the manager of Midwest Electric Co-op in Fisher County and other community leaders simply weren't willing to watch their economy deteriorate and their population dwindle. So they did something about it.

They formed an economic commission, and projects to revive local assets—like restoring historic Main Street storefronts—were put into motion. They brought in new business and provided the professional services needed to support commercial development. Today, with a new livestock processing plant, a business "incubator," and other signs of growth, parents and youngsters look at their hometown with a whole new vision.

Fisher County's story is not unique. Neither is the leadership provided by the electric co-op there. In fact, there are 1,000 rural electric systems in 46 states, helping communities cope with challenging conditions. These electric co-ops, owned by the people they serve, provide the leadership and resources needed to strengthen community foundations.

In Alabama, a local co-op has helped build and operate a water system for several thousand people. A sporting goods plant in South Dakota was saved when a co-op manager found a buyer for the facility. In Vermont, a languishing farming community built a ski village and training center with a co-op's help. Co-ops in Wisconsin formed an organization to rebuild homes and businesses after natural disasters. The list goes on and on.



Bob Bergland is Executive Vice President of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

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To say that oil is now underpriced isn't to say that it doesn't reflect market forces. Rather, it's to say that these market forces have short time horizons; they fail to take into account society's long-term interests. In the long run, after all, oil will become quite scarce. A higher price for the end users of oil—in the form, say, of a government tax—would do us the service of encouraging oil conservation (often via increased energy efficiency) and spurring the development of the alternative energy sources on which we will need increasingly to rely. Today's low oil prices portend further dependence on oil and hence greater economic dislocation as reserves dry up. Also, in the long term the various nasty byproducts of fossil fuels will catch up with us, making the air in many cities even dirtier, and making the greenhouse effect an oppressive reality. These environmental "externalities" should also, in principle, be added to the price of oil.

There are various ways to make ourselves treat oil in a more enlightened fashion—i.e., to act as if it were more expensive, and thereby reduce our dependence on it. A gasoline tax would encourage conservation while swelling the federal treasury by a billion dollars for every penny per gallon added. (Our gas tax is now about one-fifth of Japan's and one-eighth of France's.) More broadly effective would be a tax on oil (imported *and* domestic), which would be particularly good at stimulating substitution of other energy sources. Raising the fuel efficiency requirement for new cars to 30 miles per gallon (Reagan cut it to 27) would whittle down oil consumption (and auto emissions) further.

And then there are more straightforward ways of discouraging oil consumption—for example, taking a potentially big oil field and declaring it off-limits. This is an especially handy approach in cases where the prospect of poking holes in the field in question has hordes of environmentalists up in arms. Why not kill two birds with one stone—prepare your nation for a strong future and keep yourself safe from the Sierra Club? And remember: if worse comes to worse, and alternative energy sources don't pan out as we hope, and three decades from now we desperately need oil, it will still be there. It is conceivable that our national security could someday dictate disrupting a pristine and rare Arctic ecosystem that at peak production would supply only two percent of our current oil needs. And if so we'll no doubt do it. But we're not even close to that point now.

And by the way: don't pay any attention to the claims of big oil interests and George Bush (which is to say, big oil interests) that there's no tradeoff between preserving the environment and permitting exploration and development. Even before the Valdez accident (which in itself is cause to pause and reflect, of course), the Fish and Wildlife Service reported that damage to the habitat in Prudhoe Bay was already much greater than the environmental impact statement predicted before development got in gear. Should oil be found and pursued in the ANWR, that area would be in for the same fate. Drilling for oil takes more than just a long screw and a small circle of land: sleepless air strips and gravel roads carve up the tundra; vast pits are dug and wetlands dredged; thousands of workers move into prefabricated dormitories with all the non-biodegradable comforts of home.

The ANWR is the calving ground for the 185,000-member Porcupine caribou herd and a source of food for many species of birds from around the world on their migratory routes. Environmentalists call it the last remaining Arctic ecosystem; people and birds and mammals and fish have hunted each other and survived together there for thousands of years. This 125-mile strip of land is the only piece of the Alaskan coastline that the oil companies have been denied. It would be a monumental feat of hypocrisy for us to open it to drilling at the same time we are asking the Brazilians not to burn their remaining rain forest; the two bases for this request—concern about the greenhouse effect and about the environment—apply also to Arctic oil drilling. Passing pending legislation to make the ANWR a "wilderness" will protect the land long after the public furor over Valdez has subsided (and, in truth, will be reversible should the national interest urgently demand reversal). Without such legislation, we will inevitably bleed the ANWR for a fleeting energy fix, and throw it away forever.

RED MISCHIEF

Mikhail Gorbachev is bravely imposing liberal ideals upon his society, but he has just presided over a shameless exercise in diplomatic opportunism. The Soviet Union has sold Libya 15 Sukhoi-24D bombers, with the means to bomb targets in southern Europe, in Israel, and elsewhere. Moscow is also training Libyan pilots to fly these supersonic planes (which they have never sold to anybody before). A gift has been made, in short, a new lethal instrument has been given, to Qaddafi's irrationality.

The response in the West has been, approximately: Mikhail, say it isn't so. "Puzzled American officials" were the subjects of the *New York Times* report. Those who have been impressed by Gorbachev's counterrevolution, by the obvious sincerity of his intention to open up and restructure his airless, moribund society (we include ourselves among those admirers), have been struck by the cynicism, by the unprincipled, mischievous quality, of the Libyan sale. They—we—were similarly fascinated by Eduard Shevardnadze's obsequies toward the mullahs in Tehran at the very moment that Salman Rushdie was running for his life against the Ayatollah Khomeini's threat to kill him and the freedoms that his book represents.

How to explain such mischief? Presumably, not ideologically. The conventional wisdom seems correct in holding that Soviet foreign policy is no longer animated primarily by ideology. But ideology is not all that motivates a great power. Indeed, world revolution has not been an objective of Soviet diplomacy for years now. The aims of Soviet policy have been rather more conventional: power; influence; the diminishment of its rivals. The Libyan arms sale is a reminder that these things survive the death of cold war.

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In early retrospect, the cold war looks rather like a particularly pointed form of great power rivalry. Such rivalry can take many forms. The world is probably safer for the fact that the contest between the United States and the Soviet Union is no longer obsessively philosophical. Still, the contest remains. The "pragmatism" that Gorbachev has brought to Soviet foreign policy denotes shrewdness, not surrender. The Soviet Union appears no longer willing to suffer high costs for foreign policy adventure. Afghanistan and Angola are the notable illustrations. But where there are no great costs to suffer, as in Libya and Iran, the Soviet Union seems not at all averse to adventure. It remains, after all, a great power. It may be expected to act like one.

Is the Bush administration prepared for a competition that is non-ideological but real? Its own "pragmatism" seems oddly uninterested in advantage. Its "pragmatism" is more like Trump's than Metternich's. James Baker seems to think that foreign policy is a form of litigation, that diplomacy is only a particularly tony art of the deal. Brent Scowcroft is a supreme splitter of differences, who has attained his eminence by translating questions of foreign policy into questions of bureaucratic politics. We are hearing a lot these days about "realism," "the art of the possible," "getting from here to there," "centrism," and so on. The White House's recent review of American policy toward the Soviet Union has recommended to the president a policy called "status quo-plus." Plus what? The president has been advised, in effect, that history asks of him only to react, only to manage, only to stay steady in place.

Is this really the best the United States can do? Is it really an achievement to sally forth like lawyers to meet the imagination and the inspiration of Gorbachev? Do these interesting times really require no vision, no theory, no concept, no plan? It is just as well that the cold war is over, since this administration would have been poorly equipped to fight it. But, as the sale of the Sukhois to Libya demonstrates, it isn't quite Miller time.

NOTEBOOK

RETURN OF THE KILLER GRAPES: A number of readers have taken exception to our recent assertion (see Notebook, April 3) that the FDA overreacted in keeping Chilean fruit off supermarket shelves after two Chilean grapes were found to contain non-lethal quantities of cyanide. Particularly provocative, it seems, was our suggestion that "a couple of dead Americans would be an unfortunate but fair price to pay right now—not just to give democracy a chance in Chile, but to head off the countless replays of this express-line terrorism that are now almost inevitable." Several readers, in what we trust is not a coordinated campaign, have suggested that perhaps a couple of TNR editors should follow their own advice and voluntarily die for Chile. A survey of TNR editors reveals that we would just as soon not, thank you. This survey also reveals that in our opinion our reluctance to die for Chile is irrelevant to the point we were making. Consistency doesn't demand that we volunteer for martyr duty, since we weren't asking anyone else to do so. All we were asking of other Americans was that they roll the cosmic dice and take a one-in-a-hundred-million chance of dying, and that much we *are* willing to do. (Strictly speaking, we're only asking that all grape eaters be free to take that chance after hearing the facts about the case—freedom the FDA wasn't willing to grant. But for the sake of analytical cleanliness, not to mention rhetorical drama, let's assume the risk would be shared by all.) Any readers who have trouble agreeing with us that a few lives can justifiably be sacrificed to the greater good should try answering this question: Should the speed limit on interstate highways be lowered to 15 miles per hour in order to save lives? No? You mean you're willing to kill hundreds of Americans a year just for a little societal efficiency? Well, then, will *you* volunteer to be one of the hundreds who die? Of course not. You merely volunteer to get on the highway with lots of fast-moving cars, fully aware that this puts you at a slight risk of dying violently. Similarly, we merely volunteer to eat Chilean grapes that pose an infinitesimal risk to our health. End of story. Or, at least, it would be the end of the story, if some readers hadn't raised a second issue. They wrote in noting that the health of the Chilean economy isn't the concern of the FDA. And, of course, they're right. But presidents have been known to have their Cabinet members cooperate—so that, say, the FDA worked in concert with, say, the State Department. But let's grant that this sort of strategy may be beyond the grasp of this administration (which just spent months conducting a massive interagency foreign policy study, which basically concluded that the administration should play things by ear for a while). In fact, let's forget the State Department's interest in this—i.e., Chile's welfare—altogether. Let's just focus on the cost of the FDA's ruling to the American economy. Keeping around $100 million worth of Chilean fruit off the shelves cost the *American* economy at *least* $20 million—which means that, even supposing that the FDA ruling saved a couple of lives (which it didn't), we paid at least $10 million per life. This brings us to our next point, which will provoke the *next* round of letters calling our humanity into question: our society long ago decided that an American life is not worth that much money, and it was a sound decision.

SAY IT AIN'T SO, JOE: If we had known that so many of TNR's readers were English history buffs, we would have run Joe Queenan's article "Dead and Breakfast" (March 20) through our rigorous fact-checking department. But we figured the dismal state of American education would shield us from informed scrutiny. Wrong, wrong, wrong. Hordes of readers have pointed out the following: Oliver Cromwell died in 1658 (not 1558); Elizabeth I is buried next to Mary I (not Mary, Queen of Scots); it is Thomas Cranmer (not Cramner) and Boadicea (not Boedicia). TNR is guilty of transposing Henry VI into Henry IV, for which we apologize to both the author and our readers.

QUAYLE UPDATE UPDATE: For a couple of months now there has been an eerie lull in TNR's Quayle

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revisionism contest; examples of journalists finding wholly unexpected depth and maturity in the vice president quit rolling in. Then an explanation materialized. Word in Washington has it that some journalists would actually *like* to write flattering things about Quayle but are afraid to, lest they be humiliated by winning our Quayle revisionism award. This theory is certainly consistent with the latest entry in the contest. It is an article written by Johanna Neuman of *USA Today*, sent in both by her husband, Ron Nessen, and by Tod H. Loofbourrow of Boston. The article is titled "Doubters are surprised at 'new Quayle,' " and it notes that "some in the corridors of power are starting to take him seriously." But Neuman spends half the article implicitly disqualifying herself from the revisionism sweepstakes, conveying emphatically that *she* isn't especially impressed by the VP, and that she knows that other people find him impressive only by comparison with his bad first impression. "To an extent," she writes with detachment, "the current revisionism about Quayle stems from the comparison to a campaign image so negative that . . ." etc. And: "*Within the context of low expectations,* [emphasis added] Quayle has surprised doubters." For good measure, she quotes Roger Stone saying, "He's benefiting tremendously from low expectations." And then there's this priceless quote from David Garth: "He had only one direction to go in, but to his credit he went in it." (More laudatory things have been said about rats in mazes.) Of course, there's another theory as to why journalists all over America aren't calling Quayle Einstein: he keeps saying things that make such an assessment problematic. His most recent contribution came after the abortion rights march on Washington. Quayle was quoted in the *New York Times* as calling the march—which featured between a quarter of a million and half a million people, and was easily one of the largest Washington demonstrations in the history of the republic—"nothing unusual in this town."

OFF THE RECORD:

CBS Records drops most vinyl

—*Hollywood Reporter*, March 15

CBS Disks Reaffirms That It's Still In The Vinyl Biz

—*Variety*, same day
(thanks to Jeffrey R. Benjamin, Los Angeles, California)

STUCK IN THE FAST LANE:

In Autos, U.S. Makes Strides

—*New York Times*, March 25

U.S. Vehicle Sales Are Sluggish

—same paper, same day
(thanks to several readers)

Fast is best.

HUMAN RACE

By Bill Doherty

Truth is am getting older. Everybody getting older. Remaining time more valuable. No patience with slow or long. Boring. Others feeling same. Witness success of TV sound bites and superzappers. Keep things moving. Fast.

New hypothesis forming: fast is best. Evidence everywhere. Look at history. Big Bang over in 1/1,000 second. Take Dordogne cave paintings: buffalos traveling fast/all legs in air. No moss growing under. Take Renaissance paintings: different perspective, but background detail 30 miles. Instant travel/save much time. Take movies: *Breathless*. Belmondo beats up on new person next frame leaving last scene kissing Seberg. Jump cut to computer bytes.

Fast is best. So make life faster. For starter, buy microwave oven/cook 5 lb. roast in 2.1 minutes.

Next preparing repaint living room. How to cope? Many books. No longer reading. Too big. Too long. Take Hegel: blackmail for degree. What learned? Note intro: ". . . attempt to harmonize Greek ontology with Kantian psychology . . ." Never understood. Try encyclopedia/look up Hegel. Six pages! Skim. Single line confirms truth of hypothesis: "Hegel said, 'One man has understood me, and even he has not.' "

Hegel correct. Nothing understood. Try dictionary/look up ontology: "A particular system according to which problems of being are investigated." Right/like fast is best, Conclusion: throw out Hegel, Greeks, Kant, and encyclopedia. All fat books out, except dictionary.

Wise teacher shortens all things. Take small thin book: *Tao Teh Ching*. Easy to skim. Page 54: "He is enlightened, but he cares not whether others see his light." Agree. Lao Tzu fast. Keep Lao Tzu.

Progress to music: 33s and 78s with heavy equipment exit. Young son approves idea of new CD system. Son happy. But wife unhappy. Discovers handyman helping me throw out archaic baby grand/overstuffed chaise next in line. (Helper flees/can't cope with mixed messages.)

Well-known fact women better in communication/relationships than breakthrough ontological theories. Take her by hand/lead her to chaise. Use short bytes quality talk to end impasse. Remind her idea redecorating hers. I expediter, replacing slow/heavy/tedious/long/boring with fast/light/easy/short/fun in getting project done.

My turn listen re arbitrary decisions/family tradition of piano/chaise comfortable chic. I try shorten discussion. Put arm around her. Show chip of beautiful light apricot paint for walls. Wife objects.

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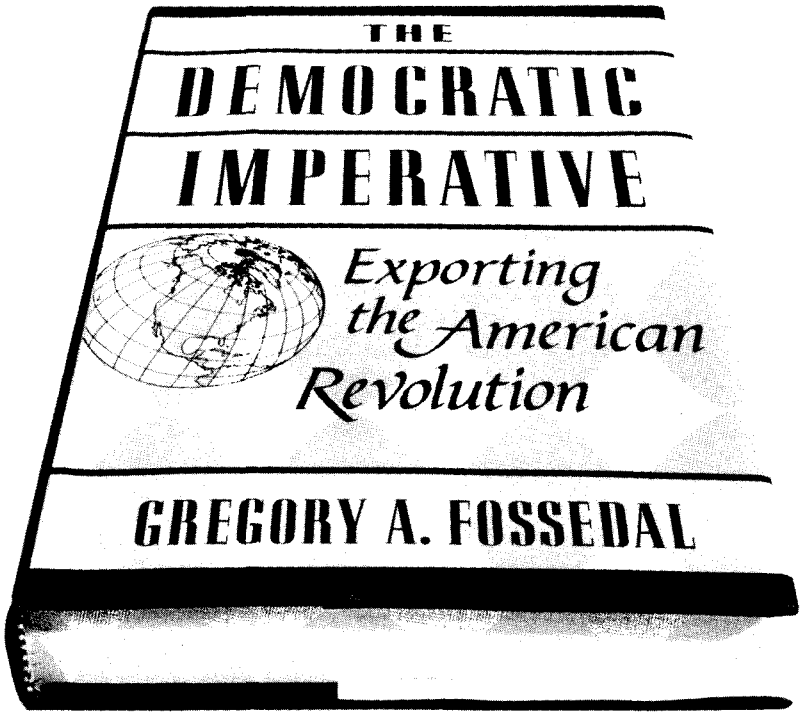

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How not to pick a president in 1992.

JACKSON RULES

By Fred Barnes

The fix was in. When the Democratic Party's rules committee met in Washington three weeks before the national convention last year, member after member jumped up to extol changes in the presidential delegate selection process negotiated by minions of Michael Dukakis and Jesse Jackson. The changes, said Dukakis supporter James Goodale of New York, recognize "that proportional representation is the finest way of electing delegates." Randall Mangham of Georgia, a Jackson backer, said they recognize that when a candidate "receives 40 percent of the popular vote, that candidate should also receive 40 percent of the delegates." The committee ratified the changes without a peep of dissent. And there was no debate at the Atlanta convention either. Although the changed rules would govern the 1992 Democratic presidential race, Senator John Breaux of Louisiana told the delegates that the revised rules are "our road map to the victory we all want in November of 1988." The convention approved the new rules by unanimous voice vote.

Only now are Democrats facing up to the consequences of the Dukakis-Jackson rules deal: it's going to be harder than ever for the Democratic nominee in 1992 to win the presidency. Why? The new rules make it less likely that a decisive winner, with a big bulge in delegates, will emerge early in the primaries. The rules also give runners-up a strong incentive to stay in the race until the convention. This is not a road map to victory. Democrats are a coalition party, not as ideologically homogeneous as Republicans (who have a consensus party). It takes time to bring the factions together, and the sooner that process starts, the better. There's one final consequence of the new rules. They practically guarantee that Jesse Jackson will get more delegates than he did in 1988. Thus he'll have more leverage. Dukakis, rather than spare the 1992 nominee all the trouble he had with Jackson, has made sure the nominee will have even more. It's Dukakis's revenge.

The specific changes sound innocuous. Nelson Polsby, a political scientist at the University of California, Berkeley, calls them "a mild retrogression." But they can have a big impact. Jackson wanted to eliminate all "superdelegates"—party and elected officials who are automatic delegates to the convention. He settled for barring most of the 404 members of the Democratic National Committee from serving as automatic delegates. He also got rid of the mandatory 15 percent threshold that a candidate must reach in a primary to collect any delegates. Most important of all, the Dukakis-Jackson deal ended "bonus" and "loophole" primaries. In these, the winner in a congressional district either gets a bonus of one extra delegate or, in the six loophole states, all the delegates.

The changes were neither openly arrived at nor made with the party's best interests at heart. In 1982 and again in 1986, party commissions deliberated in public for months before recommending changes in the delegate selection process. The 1988 changes were worked out by Tad Devine, Dukakis's delegate counter, and Harold Ickes, a Jackson agent, in private talks. They were pursuing their candidate's interest, not the party's or the 1992 nominee's. Dukakis didn't seek any rules changes. He was merely eager to accommodate Jackson. His goal was a harmonious convention and nice kickoff to the campaign against George Bush. If he won the presidency and the new rules became a problem, he could get the DNC to change them back. If he lost, the rules were someone else's problem. Jackson was thinking ahead to his 1992 presidential bid. He sought to maximize the number of delegates he could get while winning few primaries. He acted like a fellow who doesn't believe he has a real shot at the 1992 nomination. If he believed he did, he'd have gone for rules that helped the frontrunner wrap up the race. Instead, he strengthened the position of the guy who finishes second, presumably himself.

In 1988 Jackson had 1,219 of the 4,162 delegates. That was enough for him to stay in the race until the convention, secure the rules changes, and force Dukakis to treat him as a political equal in Atlanta. In 1992 Jackson will have more power still. "If he maintains his base, he should go into the next convention with approximately 1,500 delegates," says Mark Siegel, a DNC member and Jackson foe. "The new rules change would put Jackson beyond the threshold of deniability—that is, the number of delegates to get one put on the ticket." In other words, Jackson would have the leverage to demand the vice presidential nomination, or else.

The rules changes put the Democratic nominee at a special disadvantage in the general election. GOP rules facilitate the emergence of a Republican winner in the early primaries. Bush locked up the nomination on Super Tuesday, March 8, when he won almost all the delegates. That gave him "the luxury of three or four months" to plan his message and tactics for the fall, says Bob Beckel, a top Democratic strategist. By May, Bush aides were testing the Pledge of Allegiance and Willie Horton issues on "focus groups" of swing voters in New Jersey. Meanwhile in the Democratic contest, Dukakis was mired in trench warfare with Jackson. "Your chances in the general election are inversely proportional to the amount of time it takes you to get the nomination," says Tom Donilon, a veteran of the Carter, Mondale, and Dukakis campaigns. "That's axiomatic." Dukakis had to concentrate on the nomination until the day he got it.

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Fair representation of grass-roots Democrats is important in delegate selection, says Donilon. "But there's another value here—getting a strong nominee early." Loophole and bonus primaries are critical. "You've got to have decision points, closure points, break points where candidates get out." The loophole primaries, where the winner can pile up large delegate margins, serve this purpose, particularly the Illinois primary in mid-March and Pennsylvania in early April. "If you win a loophole primary, you can get a 60, 80, 90 delegate bump out of it," argues Donilon. "That's what early nominations are made of." The new rules may deprive the front-runner of several hundred delegates. "If it's 200 or 250, that's a lot to take away from the front-runner as he's driving to the nomination," Donilon says.

When the front-runner suffers, also-rans have an incentive to stay in the race. Under proportional representation, they'll continue to pick up delegates, whether they win or lose primaries. "Over the last 20 years, the rules changes have catapulted the presidential nominating process from a regime of coalition-building into a regime of faction-mobilization," says Polsby. The new changes "mobilize the factions even more." Party unity is delayed. Elaine Kamarck, a Democratic rules expert, says the changes pull candidates further apart as the nomination fight endures. "Ideological differences, which may start out small, can get big when a [runner-up] candidate needs a rationale for himself and his delegates to stay in the race." This happened in 1988, when Jackson began likening Dukakis to Ronald Reagan. "Instead of the dynamic in the party going toward peace," says Kamarck, "it goes toward war." Prolonged war in the primaries means defeat in the general election.

The person who now must solve the rules mess is Ron Brown, the new Democratic national chairman. He's in a particularly awkward position because he was Jackson's campaign chief last year. But he orchestrated the rules deal, knowing full well its impact on the 1992 nomination. Brown is committed to revoke one rules change, the stripping of automatic delegate status from DNC members. They're his most immediate constituency, and he had to promise when running for chairman to restore that status. Even here, though, Brown will be in a position to aid Jackson, or another candidate. Another of Dukakis's concessions to Jackson was to expand the at-large members of the DNC from 25 to 45. Jackson got 12 of the new members (including an ardent PLO supporter and Louis Farrakhan sympathizer). At the DNC meeting in September, Brown will nominate a new slate of 45, a slate the committee is sure to ratify. Jackson, among others, will be counting how many of his backers make the slate.

But a much tougher problem for Brown is the ban on loophole and bonus primaries, which will have to be rescinded if the Democrats are going to have much of a chance of regaining the White House. In an appearance at the National Press Club in March, he said he wants to work on the party's message, not its rules. On April 12 he said it would be "foolhardy" to have "a bloody and divisive fight over the rules." Besides, Jackson has argued against any rollback, saying that proportional representation is needed for an accurate reflection of grass-roots sentiment and that a long campaign debate is good for the party. But pressure for a rollback is building among state chairs and Democratic campaign operatives, though they concede they can't prevail unless Brown agrees. A two-thirds vote of DNC members is required, since Jackson cleverly got the changes inserted in the party charter. Beckel says that if loophole and bonus primaries are allowed again, he'll lobby loudly to have every state adopt one or the other. If he succeeds, the 1992 Democratic nominee will be grateful.

POSTCARD GERMANY

OLD VOLK'S HOME

By Karen Breslau

COLOGNE

The Federal Republic of Germany is in the awkward position of making good on a 40-year-old invitation. When the West German state was established in 1949, its constitution took a less-than-subtle swipe at the rival German Democratic Republic by guaranteeing citizenship to any German making it over the border. The same offer applies to the millions of ethnic Germans, known as "Aussiedler" (roughly translated, "the outside settlers"), scattered through the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. After decades of futilely applying for exit visas, and of hearing West German politicians bleat "Let my people go," the Aussiedler are pouring in. Last year, in a mass migration reminiscent of the postwar period, 200,000 of them, mostly from Poland and the Soviet Union, turned up at West German relocation centers. This year 350,000 more returnees from what the liberal weekly *Spiegel* calls the "Perestroika Reich" are expected. For West Germans, the result is an uncomfortable face-to-face encounter with their nation's expansionist past.

After living in a cultural time capsule, the *glasnost*-liberated Aussiedler arrive in this modern Euro-republic clinging to romantic notions of a proud, homogeneous nation that no longer exists. Their homecoming has created culture shock on both sides. The cosmopolitan West German pasta-and-brie set views the sauerkraut-and-potatoes Germans from the East with a mixture of curiosity, contempt, and pity. Pity, because the Aussiedler often paid the price for the wartime crimes committed by the Third Reich—and because they never got a slice of the postwar *Wirtschaftswunder*, West Germany's economic miracle. Now they're supposed to get their belated share of this country's roaring prosperity. The question is, who's going to pay for it?

Aussiedler families often end up living "temporarily" in old schools, town halls, and converted gyms. In a dreary dormitory on the outskirts of Cologne, I encountered one such family, refugees from Alma-Ata in Soviet

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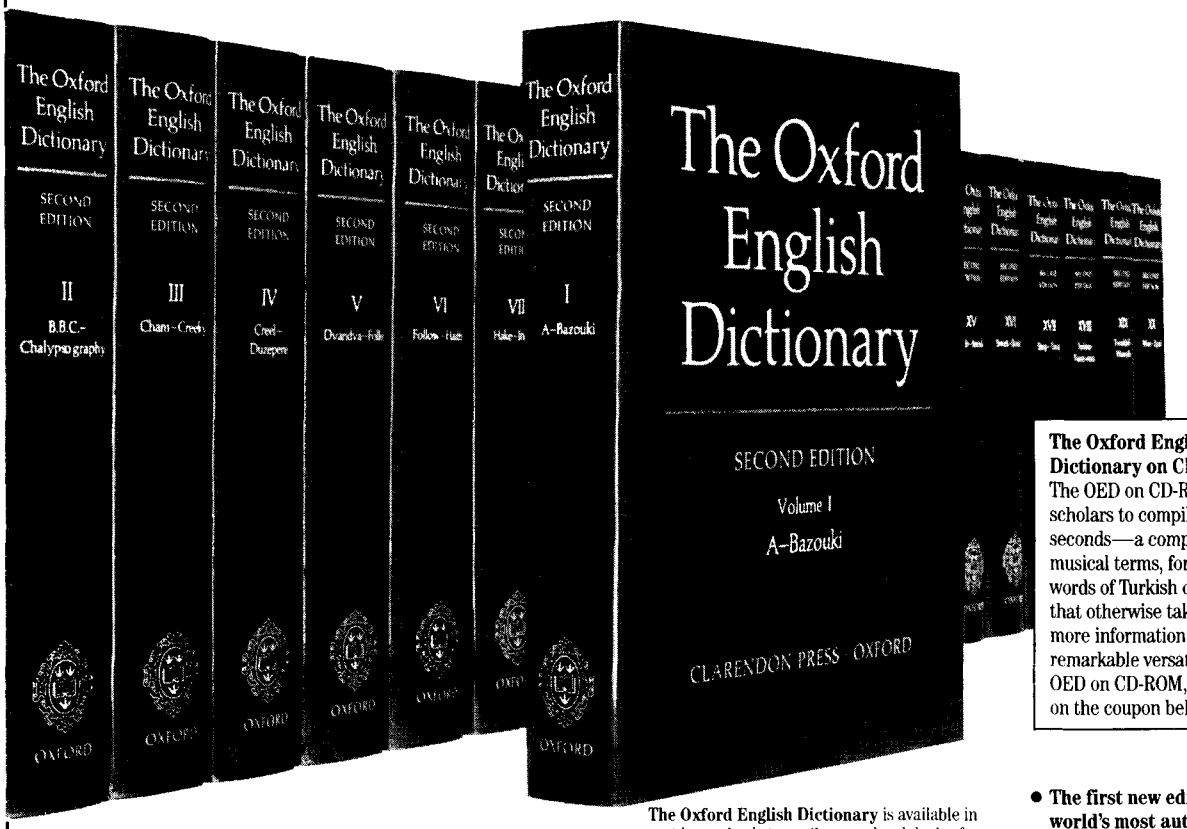

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Central Asia. Otto Lapp, 62, his 56-year-old wife, Irma, and five of their six grown children have lived for more than a year in two small rooms crammed with a hodgepodge of furniture donated by local Catholic church groups. The Lapp family descends from Germans Catherine the Great invited to Russia in the 18th century to settle the fertile Volga River Valley. During the war the Lapps, like other Germans, were deported by Stalin to Siberia; afterward, they resettled in Alma-Ata, where Otto worked as a bus driver. In an archaic dialect that reflects the family's Black Forest origins, Otto talks with baseless optimism of his plans to get a job. (Perhaps he doesn't realize that most West German laborers his age have retired, and that the country's unemployment rate has stagnated at around 8.5 percent for most of the 1980s.) His children, also jobless, don't speak German at all. The Lapps know little about the realities of their new country. They long for *Volk* and *Heimat*, people and homeland—anachronistic ideals, misused by the Nazis, that are apt to make modern West Germans feel queasy.

After living among Slavic and other Eastern neighbors, many Aussiedler are used to viewing their nationality as a seal of quality. A resettled German mother from Lithuania assures me that the unruly children in the hallway outside her immaculate dormitory room are Poles. "We," she says with the same hauteur a West German housewife might use about the Turks across the hall, "are the only real Germans on this floor." Another woman, whose ancestors left the Rhineland some 700 years ago to settle in Romania, boasts that her family has never suffered the indignity of a Romanian-German marriage.

In their zeal to prove that they are real Germans, the Aussiedler have discovered one of this country's most painful social truths. West German society is so anxious to be absolved of the past that it has failed—or declined—to develop a sense of patriotism and national identity capable of galvanizing its citizens without frightening its neighbors. For 40 years overt displays of "German-ness" have been suppressed here for fear of tarnishing the humane image West Germany wants to project abroad.

What liberals fear is that the Aussiedler obsession with "German-ness" will fuel a nationwide resurgence of German nationalism. That doesn't seem to be happening. West Germans have reacted to the arrival of the Aussiedler with the same trepidation one would accord any long-lost cousin who pops up on the doorstep with the wife and kids packed in the ramshackle car at the curb. To the average reader of the daily tabloid *Bild*, inflamed by headlines such as "A TURKISH CHANCELLOR IN THE YEAR 2000?" the Aussiedler are yet another threatening rabble of outsiders. The fact that the new Germans don't speak German, and that they arrive in Polish cars and Aeroflot jets, does little to endear them to those already skeptical about the government's brotherhood line. West Berlin and Frankfurt voters who went for the xenophobic bile of ultra-right-wing parties in the recent local elections are apparently as worried about vying with the Aussiedler for jobs and housing as they are about competing with the Turks, Yugoslavs, Pakistanis, Palestinians, et al. who have settled here in recent years.

The educated middle and upper-middle classes have little in common intellectually or culturally with their new compatriots, who were often farmers or handworkers in Eastern Europe. The Aussiedler are versed in sayings and folk songs that most young Germans have never learned and that many older ones would just as soon forget. After several months of teaching a German language course for Aussiedler, a 24-year-old student instructor in Wiesbaden concludes wryly, "They're more German than we are." Her companion adds a sentiment heard often among younger people here: "They're Germans. We're Europeans." Another teacher finds that her students are amazed by the "non-authoritarian" West German education methods. For the first two weeks of their language course, her 50-year-old students would rise and stand ramrod-straight whenever the 30-year-old teacher asked a question.

Because of their unique legal status, the Aussiedler have vaulted to the top of the formidable West German social welfare apparatus. The state-sponsored "Welcome Wagon" provides Aussiedler with a token welcome payment, unemployment benefits, a free ten-month German course, special tax breaks, pensions, and rent-free temporary housing. Though the accommodations are barely tolerable, what is often perceived as excessive government generosity toward the newcomers arouses palpable resentment among low-income, native-born West Germans. Many suspect that "Aussiedler" is a new expression for "economic opportunist." The lively market in Poland for forged documents intended to "prove" German heritage has contributed to that belief.

Prominent liberals are torn between their affinity for the oppressed and their distaste for an immigration policy that smacks more and more of tribalism. The emphasis on ethnic origins as a determining factor in immigration has revived deeply disturbing associations with the racist Reich. Social Democrat Oscar LaFontaine, a possible challenger to Chancellor Helmut Kohl in the 1990 national elections, has cautioned against "exaggerated Germanomania." He suggested that a Third World asylum-seeker whose life was in danger might deserve the government's help more than an ethnic German from Eastern Europe whose connection to this country was cut generations ago. The Social Democrats have proposed a plan (increasingly palatable to the German public) to raise payments to East bloc governments if they improve the lot of Germans living there, in return for a mutually developed emigration schedule. This would at least buy time to allow the country's strained welfare system to prepare for its growing task; as many as 3.5 million ethnic Germans may be packing their bags to head for the Promised Land.

The same conservatives who spent years pushing for immigration curbs could scarcely contain their glee at the large Aussiedler families coming across the border from Poland. Skeptics note that the huge, young families that conservatives have trumpeted as saviors of a childless nation also increase the anti-Communist, conservative voting bloc Christian Democrats will need if

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they are to survive the 1990 elections. But that appears less and less likely, given the breadth of the anti-immigrant backlash and the perception that Kohl, rather than historical forces beyond his control, is to blame.

Meanwhile, to enlighten a confused public that seems unable or unwilling to distinguish between the Aussiedler and other immigrant groups, the Interior Ministry has announced a public relations campaign. One slogan: "They *are* Germans." Whatever that means.

KAREN BRESLAU is a reporter living in Cologne.

T. Boone Pickens's suicidal Tokyo takeover.

KAMIKAZE CAPITALISM

By Michael M. Lewis

The Japanese appear determined to make a gruesome example of T. Boone Pickens. In early April his merchant bank, Boone & Co., announced that it had acquired a 20 percent stake in Koito, a Japanese manufacturer of auto parts. In most parts of the world (including the United States), news that an American predator is stalking a company does wonders for the price of its stock. But after the Pickens announcement, Koito's share price fell. Japanese securities houses, which account for most of the volume on the Tokyo Stock Exchange, dumped their Koito holdings massively. For Koito's deep-pocketed and patient Japanese shareholders, a steep fall in prices is a minor inconvenience—and, in their view, a small price to pay to keep people like Pickens from getting in the habit of wreaking havoc with their stock prices. "They want to cut his fingers off," observed one Western broker.

That would make sense. What doesn't seem to make sense is Pickens's decision to move into Japan's markets in the first place. Pickens has netted hundreds of millions of dollars making abortive raids—"greenmail" is the term—with his small oil company, Mesa Petroleum, on big oil companies, such as Gulf, Phillips, and Unocal. But Boone Pickens versus Japan Inc. seems a less rational contest than Boone Pickens versus Big Oil. In the first place, Pickens knows nothing about auto parts. Second, he knows nothing about Japan. Third, even if he wanted to, he couldn't gain control of Koito; 60 percent of its shares are held by its bankers, suppliers, and customers, who have no intention of selling. Finally, the stock looks dangerously expensive. Its price-earnings ratio of 257-to-1 is fantastic even for Japan's inflated stock market. And Pickens paid *three times* the 1,200 yen that is considered a fair valuation on Koito's shares.

All told, raiding Japan seems an awfully messy way to make a buck. So why bother? Well, suppose you're a rich Texan entering your reflective years. You have $150 million in the bank, a pretty wife, six toothsome heirs, a ranch, two dozen good bird dogs, a shotgun, and an oak-panelled wall in your mind lined with trophy heads of Big Oil CEOs you've slain. Your oil business is slow. Your autohagiography is paid for and published. There aren't many new ways for you to loose your ego on the world, except . . . perhaps . . . POLITICS.

T. Boone Pickens is being mentioned across Texas as a candidate for governor. He hasn't denied the reports. He's even told friends he'd like the job. His weird excursion in the Orient makes more sense if he's trying to tap the well of resentment that bootstrapped Texans living on $15 a barrel feel toward prosperous foreigners. In a single stroke Pickens may have bagged a ready-made populist issue (prying open the Japanese stock market), identified himself with the product Americans grow most misty-eyed about (cars), and found common ground with the very CEOs he's built a career on vilifying (and Pickens, a Republican, needs to make his peace with big business). He's made their enemy his enemy. Eight hundred million dollars may seem like a stiff price to pay for campaign rhetoric. But a dime will get you a dollar that Pickens hasn't got much of his own money on the line in Japan. As in his other raids, he's probably found a backer.

If Pickens is indeed trying to make a show of prying open the Japanese stock market, he may be onto a timely issue. The SEC is already studying Japan's financial markets, and making noises about "lack of reciprocity." But for them to include the mauling of Boone Pickens on their list of grievances would be a waste of precious negotiating capital. The ability to make hostile acquisitions of Japanese firms shouldn't be high on our list of priorities.

True, the Japanese have bought into America. But although they in theory have the right to make hostile takeovers here, they have refrained from doing so. They no doubt refrain in part to strengthen their hand in just this situation, in part because they know American politicians wouldn't stand for their raiding our companies, and in part to keep American protectionist sentiment under control. But whatever the reason, hostile takeovers is one area where America already enjoys effective reciprocity with Japan.

Besides, there are far more worthy financial causes for a U.S. trade negotiator than ensuring equal opportunity greenmail. If you want to see how a protected industry can become grossly inefficient, pay a call on a Japanese investment bank. A couple of years ago a friend of mine visited market leader Nomura in Tokyo and asked for a recent history of Japanese interest rates. The Nomura broker wheeled in a shopping cart containing a decade of handwritten records of Japanese government bond yields. An American broker could have given you an answer in 20 seconds by hitting a key on a computer. Why couldn't that broker move to Japan, bring his computer with him, and radically increase the industry's efficiency? Japan's antiquated fixed brokerage commission structure keeps American brokers from undercutting prices, and various other rules also keep out Americans at any cost.

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The unwritten rules are possibly more costly than the written ones. Salomon Brothers and Morgan Stanley have made hundreds of millions of dollars in Tokyo by using their more advanced technology to exploit the Japanese futures market, but they should have made hundreds of millions more. Instead of letting nature take its course, the Ministry of Finance constantly intervenes, threatening to change the rules of futures contracts in the middle of the game, whispering to Japanese firms when the Bank of Japan plans a big purchase of a certain security, and generally providing Japanese firms with an informational edge. Our investment bankers are loath to complain, however, for fear of retribution from the Ministry of Finance.

I know, American investment bankers are an unlikely candidate for sympathy. My point is only that T. Boone Pickens is even less deserving of sympathy.

The last thing we should demand of the Japanese is the right to create the kind of turmoil in their stock market that we've created in ours. Suppose American negotiators somehow managed to persuade Japan's bureaucrats to remold their markets in our image. It's about as likely as selling them rice, but let's play make-believe. Twenty percent of Japan's shares are traded maniacally, mainly by private investors who have never heard of such American buzzwords as "analysis," "P/E ratios," and "fundamental values." They simply buy whatever their brokers tip, and Japanese brokers are as likely to tip on the basis of rumor as on business fundamentals. The remaining 80 percent of Japan's shares are held by large Japanese institutions that, for all sorts of non-economic reasons, wouldn't dream of selling (unlike American institutional investors, who are required by law to sell to the highest bidder during a takeover attempt). This group more than offsets the first and lends stability to the market. The main reason the October 1987 crash was less severe in Japan's stock market than in any other market was that the number of tradable shares was so small. Once you spring loose the 80 percent of the shares held by Japanese institutions and move them into leveraged hands, as you necessarily would by legitimizing corporate takeovers in Japan, the Japanese stock market becomes markedly less stable.

Meanwhile, the U.S. economy would become much more sensitive to the resulting fluctuations. For now, when the Tokyo Stock Exchange sinks, the ripples on American shores are small. But if you bring in American raiders and pros, our exposure to the Japanese market will expand greatly because they'll buy the Japanese stock with money borrowed from American banks. American bankers don't urgently need to add a destabilized Tokyo stock market to their long list of imprudent risks.

"There's a place for businessmen in politics," Pickens wrote in his autobiography, *Boone*, "and that place is right out in the open, saying what they believe." In the past Pickens has said he believed in the rights of small shareholders to challenge America's fat-cat management class. He's been more fond than most of siding with the little guy. On the surface, his bold charge into big bad corporate Japan is more of the same healthy American desire to ensure that everyone gets a fair shake. In truth, it is a less attractive American desire to make other people more like us.

MICHAEL M. LEWIS is the author of *Liar's Poker* (W. W. Norton), a forthcoming book about Wall Street in its golden years.

Buying votes on the layaway plan.

NEW DEAL

By John A. Barnes and Jeffrey Hadden

The "middle-class squeeze"—the plight of middle-income families facing high housing costs, high college tuition, and various other sources of discomfort—has become the rallying cry of Democrats in search of a cause. Michael Dukakis talked a lot about it in the final weeks of his campaign, and governors across the country are busy coming up with programs to help pay for the rigors of middle-class life. This is succeeding in getting them not only middle-class votes, but lots of praise for innovative government—for the "new Democratic activism" they've ushered in.

Among the most widely lauded innovators is Governor James Blanchard of Michigan. He and his whiz-kid sidekick, State Treasurer Robert Bowman, have been wooing voters by dreaming up new ways to funnel state and federal tax breaks to people who aren't exactly in desperate need of them. But Blanchard and Bowman have gone well beyond garden-variety vote-buying. They've come up with a creative layaway plan, through which they can buy today's votes with money from tomorrow's (as well as today's) taxpayers.

In 1986 Bowman invented something called the Michigan Education Trust (MET). The idea was simple. Parents would put down a lump sum of around $6,000 for a newborn infant. The state would then invest the money itself and guarantee that by the time the child was ready for college, the return on the investment would be sufficient to cover the cost of a four-year education at a state-run institution, room and board not included. Any Michigan resident, regardless of income, is eligible, but so far most of the participants are people with household incomes over $40,000. People who earn less than $20,000 make up 17 percent of MET participants, and people making over $80,000—the people who should be least worried about affording tomorrow's tuition payments—make up fully 19 percent of participants.

This shouldn't have surprised anyone. Part of MET's allure lies in the tax breaks it offers, and they're naturally bigger for families in higher tax brackets. Payments into the fund are fully deductible against Michigan taxes, and federal taxes can be deferred until the child actually begins to use the money. Even then, the tax rate

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will be calculated against the student's (usually quite low) income, rather than the parents'. Parents will have to pay federal gift taxes on their contribution, but most of this will be covered by the large federal gift tax exemption.

Bowman had hoped to get bigger donations from the federal government. He tried to make the state's MET fund earnings exempt from federal taxation on the grounds that it was a state agency. So far, however, the Internal Revenue Service has refused to go along, so MET likely will have to pay federal taxes at the 34 percent corporate rate.

The well-advertised "guarantee" that $6,000 invested today will relieve parents of having to worry about saving around $30,000—or more, if inflation dictates—over the next two decades is something that no private savings-for-college plan offers. Combined with the tax breaks, it turned out to be quite a draw. Bowman had estimated that around 5,000 applications would be received when MET opened for business last August, but 40,000 contracts were signed.

In promising to honor the state's commitment to all these people, Bowman and Blanchard are hoping the IRS will give MET its tax break. If it does, then MET will only have to maintain a rate of return of ten percent annually from now until doomsday to stay ahead of a projected 7.3 percent tuition inflation rate. But if MET has to pay corporate taxes, it will need a before-tax return of around 15 percent. Though the state has on average exceeded that return on invested pension funds since 1981, the smart money isn't counting on a continued bull stock market.

Besides, the projected tuition inflation may prove overly optimistic. No sooner was MET in place than most Michigan state colleges and universities announced double-digit tuition hikes. Panicked, Blanchard jawboned them into lowering the increases, and the existence of MET lent weight to his case. But can he and his successors keep that up year after year? The university presidents warned that unless they receive substantially higher appropriations from the legislature—three percent to four percent above inflation—big tuition hikes down the road will be unavoidable. In other words, the state may be faced with the choice of either adding money to MET to keep it apace with tuition hikes or paying the colleges to keep tuition hikes within the range of MET. Either way, coming up with the money will be made harder by the state tax deduction granted to MET depositors, which will cost an estimated $12 million in forgone revenues in the program's first year.

And here's the punch line: the legislature, recognizing MET's risks, refused to write the tuition guarantee into law. So despite all the loose talk from Blanchard about "a contract with our people" and "guaranteeing tomorrow's tuition at today's prices," the guaranteed tuition does not, in fact, exist. The fine print of the MET legislation merely guarantees the return of the principal with any accumulated interest. When confronted with this, Bowman replies that he "can't imagine" a legislature allowing MET to default on its obligations if the unthinkable happened. He may be right. From a taxpayer's point of view, that's the scary part.

One would think that MET would be risk and burden enough for any one state government, but only a few months ago, the Home Ownership Savings Trust (HOST) sprang from Bowman's brow. The idea is similar. HOST is supposed to—here's that word again—"guarantee" that participants will have enough for a down payment on the home of their dreams. Once again, there is no income restriction on participation in the program, and there's no limit on the size or type of house that can be considered. The only requirement is that the participant be a first-time home buyer. Prospective home buyers would make monthly payments of $100 to $200 over three to ten years. The size would depend on the "declared" price range of the home they intend to buy, and the amount by which inflation was expected to raise the price of such a home in the ensuing years. The payments would be invested in state bonds.

The main difference between investing in HOST and simply buying state bonds yourself is that the state "guarantees" that HOST's yield will be great enough to cover the down payment on a home; if real estate inflation raises the price of the typical $70,000 home, say, by more than is now expected, the state will still deliver the down payment. This means that HOST is even more speculative than MET. The state at least has some control over tuitions at state colleges. It has none whatsoever over housing prices. HOST optimistically assumes housing inflation of five percent a year. Should the price of a home escalate faster than the HOST nest egg, Bowman once more assures us, the state (read taxpayers) will make up the difference.

Bowman proudly notes that many states have followed Michigan's lead in middle-class giveaways. Eight states—Florida, Indiana, Maine, Missouri, Oklahoma, Tennessee, West Virginia, and Wyoming—have adopted tuition guarantee plans. (Wyoming has even agreed to throw in the cost of room and board.) Thirteen others have adopted college savings bond programs that don't necessarily guarantee tuition.

But Bowman's enthusiasm isn't shared by all. Middle-class subsidies that put the state's general fund revenues at risk are the cause of considerable discomfort to groups such as the Michigan Legislative Black Caucus, which worries about tax revenue being siphoned away from other social programs. And that could happen in a big way. As programs such as MET and HOST multiply, states are building up a massive Ponzi scheme that could come crashing down when inflation strikes. Of course, Blanchard and Bowman are likely to be long gone from Lansing if and when MET and HOST implode.

On top of all this, the governor recently became upset at the high cost of some plane trips within Michigan. Fares can indeed be high. For the price of a round-trip ticket from Detroit to the outstation town of Escanaba, for instance, you might as well treat yourself to a vacation in London. (That way you wouldn't have to change planes in both Chicago and Green Bay.) Ignoring the fact that fares have always been high on routes that are short but lightly traveled, the governor has proposed outright subsidization of air fares within the state. The details of the plan are still sketchy, but the early signs are that it has one refreshing virtue: this middle-class give-

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away, unlike the others, won't involve any long-term savings funds of questionable solvency. It will be good old-fashioned vote-buying: today's votes with today's money.

Still, the question persists: With all these middle-class subsidies around, will there be any money left for what Democrats used to consider their priorities—brightening prospects for the poor and the unemployed, improving public education? No one seems anxious to answer that question.

JOHN A. BARNES and JEFFREY HADDEN are, respectively, deputy and associate editorial page editors of the *Detroit News*.

U.S. income inequality keeps on rising.

AS THE WORLD TURNS

By Robert B. Reich

Between 1978 and 1987, the poorest fifth of American families became eight percent poorer, and the richest fifth became 13 percent richer. That leaves the poorest fifth with less than five percent of the nation's income, and the richest fifth with more than 40 percent. This widening gap can't be blamed on the growth in single-parent lower-income families, which in fact slowed markedly after the late 1970s. Nor is it due mainly to the stingy social policy of the Reagan years. Granted, Food Stamp benefits have dropped in real terms by about 13 percent since 1981, and many states have failed to raise benefits for the poor and unemployed to keep up with inflation. But this doesn't come close to accounting for the growing inequality. Rather, the trend is connected to a profound change in the American economy as it merges with the global economy. And because the merging is far from complete, this trend will not stop of its own accord anytime soon.

It is significant that the growth of inequality shows up most strikingly among Americans who have jobs. Through most of the postwar era, the wages of Americans at different income levels rose at about the same pace. Although different workers occupied different steps on the escalator, everyone moved up together. In those days poverty was the condition of *jobless* Americans, and the major economic challenge was to create enough jobs for everyone. Once people were safely on the work force escalator, their problems were assumed to be over. Thus "full employment" became a liberal rallying cry, while conservatives fretted over the inflationary tendencies of a full-employment economy.

In recent years working Americans have been traveling on two escalators—one going up, the other going down. In 1987 the average hourly earnings of nonsupervisory workers, adjusted for inflation, were lower than in any year since 1966. Middle-level managers fared much better, although their median real earnings were only slightly above the levels of the 1970s. Executives, however, did spectacularly well. In 1988 alone, CEOs of the hundred largest publicly held industrial corporations received raises averaging almost 12 percent. The remunerations of lesser executives rose almost as much, and executives of smaller companies followed close behind.

Between 1978 and 1987, as the real earnings of unskilled workers were declining, the real incomes of workers in the securities industry (investment bankers, arbitrageurs, and brokers) rose 21 percent. Few investment bankers pocket anything near the $50 million lavished yearly upon the partners of Kohlberg, Kravis, Roberts & Company, or the $550 million commandeered last year by Michael Milken, but it is not unusual for a run-of-the-mill investment banker to bring home comfortably over a million dollars. Partners in America's largest corporate law firms are comparatively deprived, enjoying average yearly earnings of only $400,000 to $1.2 million.

Meanwhile, the number of impoverished *working* Americans climbed by nearly two million, or 23 percent, between 1978 and 1987. The number who worked full time and year round but were poor climbed faster, by 43 percent. Nearly 60 percent of the 20 million people who now fall below the Census Bureau's poverty line are from families with at least one member in full-time or part-time work.

The American economy, in short, is creating a wider range of earnings than at any other time in the postwar era. The most basic reason, put simply, is that America itself is ceasing to exist as a system of production and exchange separate from the rest of the world. One can no more meaningfully speak of an "American economy" than of a "Delaware economy." We are becoming but a region—albeit still a relatively wealthy region—of a global economy, whose technologies, savings, and investments move effortlessly across borders, making it harder for individual nations to control their economic destinies.

By now Washington officials well understand that the

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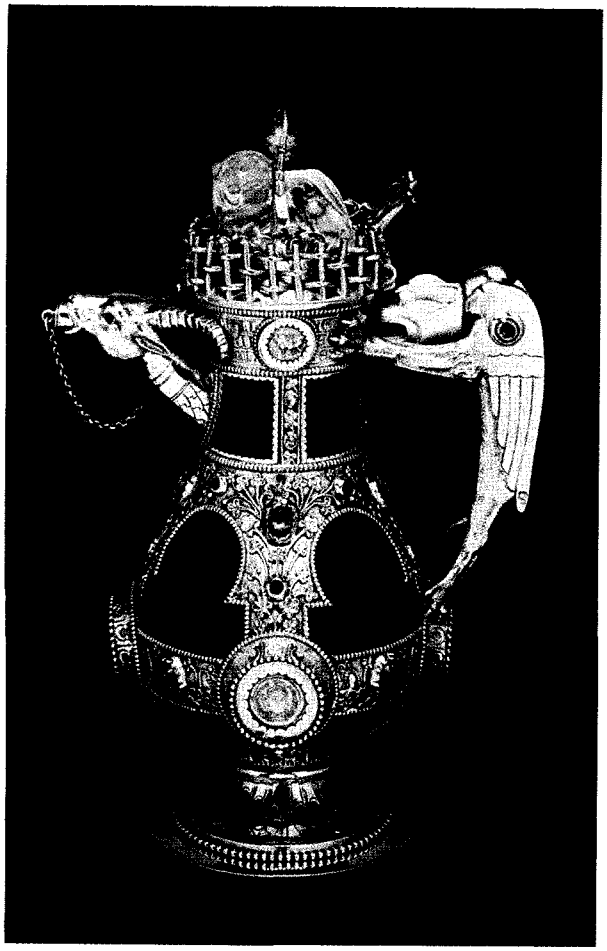
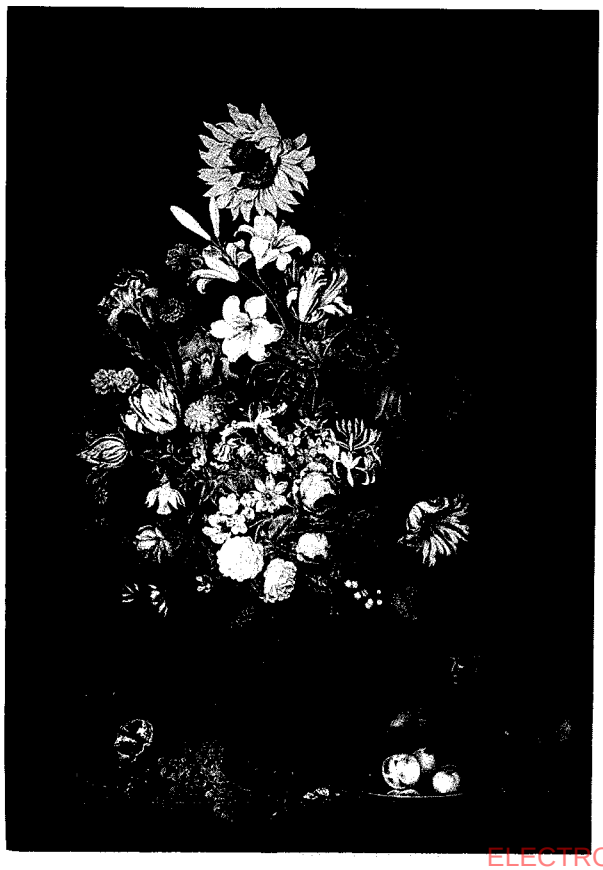
The Brilliar





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t Bequests.

It was an unprecedented idea. The year was 1816, and Richard, seventh Viscount Fitzwilliam of Merrion, wanted the University of Cambridge to have its own art museum. His bequest began the Fitzwilliam Museum, considered by many to be the finest small museum in Europe.

Now we can see why in a remarkable exhibition entitled "Treasures from the Fitzwilliam Museum: The Increase of Learning and Other Great Objects." The exhibition is as exceptional for its diversity as for its quality. It is virtually a guided tour through the history of art, with highly selective stops along the way. Pause to see a lion's ferocity on an ancient Persian coin. Leap forward a few centuries and see the power of paintings by Titian and Rubens. Stop by a drawing by Rembrandt or a print by Degas. Spend some time with sculpture from ancient Greece, or furniture from 19th-century England. In every case, what we see is what caught the discerning eye and passionate interests of generations of Cambridge-educated scholars and collectors.

We wanted to give this exhibition our support. It is rare that such collections travel, and to see this one is immensely enriching. There's the immediate benefit in seeing the finest art from other civilizations, but there is also the more lasting benefit — inevitably, we want to learn more.

National Tour: National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, March 19 - June 18, 1989
Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, TX, July 15 - October 8, 1989
National Academy of Design, New York, NY, November 5 - January 28, 1990
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA, February 20 - May 6, 1990
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA, June 21 - September 9, 1990
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(Clockwise Top Left) DECANTER, 1865, William Burges. THE LAST OF ENGLAND, 1860, Ford Madox Brown. TWO MEN'S HEADS, circa 1600, Camillo Procaccini. (Bottom Right) CHARLES, 7TH EARL OF NORTHAMPTON, 1758, Pompeo Batoni. RECUMBENT HORSE, 17th-century Chinese, black and grey jade. VASE OF FLOWERS WITH A MONKEY, circa 1635, Ambrosius II Brosschaert.

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nation's fiscal and monetary policies cannot be set without taking account of the savings that will slosh in or slosh out of the nation in consequence. Less understood is the speed and ease with which new technologies now spread across the globe, from computers in, say, San Jose, to satellite, and then back down to computers in Taiwan. (America's efforts to stop the Japanese from copying our commercial designs and the Soviets from copying our military designs are about equally doomed.) And we have yet to come to terms with the rise of the global corporation, whose managers, shareholders, and employees span the world. Our debates over the future of American jobs still focus on topics like the competitiveness of the American automobile industry or the future of American manufacturing. But these categories are increasingly irrelevant. They assume the existence of a separate American economy in which all the jobs associated with a particular industry, or even more generally with a particular sector, are bound together, facing a common fate.

New technologies of worldwide communication and transportation have redrawn the playing field. American industries no longer compete against Japanese or European industries. Rather, a company with headquarters in the United States, production facilities in Taiwan, and a marketing force spread across many nations competes with another, similarly ecumenical company. So when General Motors, say, is doing well, that probably is good news for a lot of executives in Detroit, and for GM shareholders across the globe, but it isn't necessarily good news for a lot of assembly-line workers in Detroit, because there may, in fact, be very few GM assembly-line workers in Detroit, or anywhere else in America. The welfare of assembly-line workers in Detroit may depend, instead, on the health of corporations based in Japan or Canada.

More to the point: even if those Canadian and Japanese corporations are doing well, these workers may be in trouble. For they are increasingly part of an international labor market, encompassing Asia, Africa, Western Europe—and perhaps, before long, Eastern Europe. Corporations can with relative ease relocate their production centers, and alter their international lines of communication and transportation accordingly, to take advantage of low wages. So American workers find themselves settling for low wages in order to hold on to their jobs. More and more, your "competitiveness" as a worker depends not on the fortunes of any American corporation, or of any American industry, but on what function you serve within the global economy. GM executives are becoming more "competitive" even as GM production workers become less so, because the functions that GM executives perform are more highly valued in the world market than the functions that GM production workers perform.

In order to see in greater detail what is happening to American jobs, it helps to view the work Americans do in terms of functional categories that reflect the real competitive positions of workers in the global economy. Essentially, three broad categories are emerging. Call them symbolic-analytic services, routine production services, and routine personal services.

1. *Symbolic-analytic services* are based on the manipulation of information: data, words, and oral and visual symbols. Symbolic analysis comprises some (but by no means all) of the work undertaken by people who call themselves lawyers, investment bankers, commercial bankers, management consultants, research scientists, academics, public-relations executives, real estate developers, and even a few creative accountants. Also: advertising and marketing specialists, art directors, design engineers, architects, writers and editors, musicians, and television and film producers. Some of the manipulations performed by symbolic analysts reveal ways of more efficiently deploying resources or shifting financial assets, or of otherwise saving time and energy. Other manipulations grab money from people who are too slow or naive to protect themselves by manipulation in response. Still others serve to entertain the recipients.

Most symbolic analysts work alone or in small teams. If they work with others, they often have partners rather than bosses or supervisors, and their yearly income is variable, depending on how much value they add to the business. Their work environments tend to be quiet and tastefully decorated, often within tall steel-and-glass buildings. They rarely come in direct contact with the ultimate beneficiaries of their work. When they are not analyzing, designing, or strategizing, they are in meetings or on the telephone—giving advice or making deals. Many of them spend inordinate time in jet planes and hotels. They are articulate and well groomed. The vast majority are white males.

Symbolic analysis now accounts for more than 40 percent of America's gross national product, and almost 20 percent of our jobs. Within what we still term our "manufacturing sector," symbolic-analytic jobs have been increasing at a rate almost three times that of total manufacturing employment in the United States, as routine manufacturing jobs have drifted overseas or been mastered by machines.

The services performed by America's symbolic analysts are in high demand around the world, regardless of whether the symbolic analysts provide them in person or transmit them via satellite and fiber-optic cable. The Japanese are buying up the insights and inventions of America's scientists and engineers (who are only too happy to sell them at a fat profit). The Europeans, meanwhile, are hiring our management consultants, business strategists, and investment bankers. Developing nations are hiring our civil and design engineers; and almost everyone is buying the output of our pop musicians, television stars, and film producers.

It is the same with the global corporation. The central offices of these sprawling entities, headquartered in America, are filled with symbolic analysts who manipulate information and then export their insights via the corporation's far-flung enterprise. IBM doesn't export machines from the United States; it makes machines all over the globe, and services them on the spot. IBM world headquarters, in Armonk, New York, just exports strategic planning and related management services.

Thus has the standard of living of America's symbolic

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analysts risen. They increasingly find themselves part of a global labor market, not a national one. And because the United States has a highly developed economy, and an excellent university system, they find that the services they have to offer are quite scarce in the context of the whole world. So elementary laws of supply and demand ensure that their salaries are quite high.

These salaries are likely to go even higher in the years ahead, as the world market for symbolic analysis continues to grow. Foreigners are trying to learn these skills and techniques, to be sure, but they still have a long way to go. No other country does a better job of preparing its most fortunate citizens for symbolic analysis than does the United States. None has surpassed America in providing experience and training, often with entire regions specializing in one or another kind of symbolic analysis (New York and Chicago for finance, Los Angeles for music and film, the San Francisco Bay area and greater Boston for science and engineering). In this we can take pride. But for the second major category of American workers—the providers of routine production services—the laws of supply and demand don't bode well.

2. *Routine production services* involve tasks that are repeated over and over, as one step in a sequence of steps for producing a finished product. Although we tend to associate these jobs with manufacturing, they are becoming common in the storage and retrieval of information. Banking, insurance, wholesaling, retailing, health care—all employ hordes of people who spend their days processing data, often putting information into computers or taking it out.

Most providers of routine production services work with many other people who do similar work within large, centralized facilities. They are overseen by supervisors, who in turn are monitored by more senior supervisors. They are usually paid an hourly wage. Their jobs are monotonous. Most of these people do not have a college education; they need only be able to take directions and, occasionally, undertake simple computations. Those who deal with metal are mostly white males; those who deal with fabrics or information tend to be female and/or minorities.

Decades ago, jobs like these were relatively well paid. Henry Ford gave his early production workers five dollars a day, a remarkable sum for the time, in the (correct) belief that they and their neighbors would be among the major buyers of Fords. But in recent years America's providers of routine-production services have found themselves in direct competition with millions of foreign workers, most of whom are eager to work for a fraction of the pay of American workers. Through the miracle of satellite transmission, even routine data-processing can now be undertaken in relatively poor nations, thousands of miles away from the skyscrapers where the data are finally used. This fact has given management-level symbolic analysts ever greater bargaining leverage. If routine producers living in America don't agree to reduce their wages, then the work will go abroad.

And it has. In 1950 routine production services constituted about 30 percent of our national product and well over half of American jobs. Today such services represent about 20 percent of national product and one-fourth of jobs. And the scattering of foreign-owned factories placed here to circumvent American protectionism isn't going to reverse the trend. So the standard of living of America's routine production workers will likely keep declining. The dynamics behind the wage concessions, plant closings, and union-busting that have become commonplace are not likely to change.

3. *Routine personal services* also entail simple, repetitive work, but, unlike routine production services, they are provided in person. Their immediate objects are specific customers rather than streams of metal, fabric, or data. Included in this employment category are restaurant and hotel workers, barbers and beauticians, retail sales personnel, cabdrivers, household cleaners, day-care workers, hospital attendants and orderlies, truck drivers, and—among the fastest-growing of all—custodians and security guards.

Like production workers, providers of personal services are usually paid by the hour, are carefully supervised, and rarely have more than a high school education. But unlike people in the other two categories of work, these people are in direct contact with the ultimate beneficiaries of what they do. And the companies they work for are often small. In fact, some routine personal-service workers turn entrepreneurial. (Most new businesses and new jobs in America come from this sector—now constituting about 20 percent of GNP and 30 percent of jobs.) Women and minorities make up the bulk of routine personal-service workers.

Apart from the small number who strike out on their own, these workers are paid poorly. They are sheltered from the direct effects of global competition, but not the indirect effects. They often compete with illegal aliens willing to work for low wages, or with former or would-be production workers who can't find well-paying production jobs, or with labor-saving machinery (automated tellers, self-service gas pumps, computerized cashiers) dreamed up by symbolic analysts in America and manufactured in Asia. And because they tend to be unskilled and dispersed among small businesses, personal-service workers rarely have a union or a powerful lobby group to stand up for their interests. When the economy turns sour, they are among the first to feel the effects. These workers will continue to have jobs in the years ahead and may experience some small increase in real wages. They will have demographics on their side, as the American work force shrinks. But for all the foregoing reasons, the gap between their earnings and those of the symbolic analysts will continue to grow.

These three functional categories—symbolic analysis, routine production, and routine personal service—cover at least three out of four American jobs. The rest of the nation's work force consists mainly of government employees (including public school teachers), employees in regulated industries (like utility workers), and government-financed workers (engineers working on defense weapons systems), many of whom are sheltered from global competition. One further clarification:

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some traditional job categories overlap with several functional categories. People called "secretaries," for example, include those who actually spend their time doing symbolic-analytic work closely allied to what their bosses do; those who do routine data entry or retrieval of a sort that will eventually be automated or done overseas; and those who provide routine personal services.

The important point is that workers in these three functional categories are coming to have a different competitive position in the world economy. Symbolic analysts hold a commanding position in an increasingly global labor market. Routine production workers hold a relatively weak position in an increasingly global labor market. Personal-service workers still find themselves in a national labor market, but for various reasons they suffer the indirect effects of competition from workers abroad.

How should we respond to these trends? One response is to accept them as inevitable consequences of change, but try to offset their polarizing effects through a truly progressive income tax, coupled with more generous income assistance—including health insurance—for poor working Americans. (For a start, we might reverse the extraordinarily regressive Social Security amendments of 1983, through which poor working Americans are now financing the federal budget deficit, often paying more in payroll taxes than in income taxes.)

A more ambitious response would be to guard against class rigidities by ensuring that any talented American kid can become a symbolic analyst—regardless of family income or race. Here we see the upside of a globalized economy. Unlike America's old vertically integrated economy, whose white-collar jobs were necessarily limited in proportion to the number of blue-collar jobs beneath them, the global economy imposes no particular limit upon the number of Americans who can sell symbolic-analytic services. In principle, all of America's routine production workers could become symbolic analysts and let their old jobs drift overseas. In practice, of course, we can't even inch toward such a state anytime soon. Not even America's gifted but poor children can aspire to such jobs until the government spends substantially more than it does now to ensure excellent public schools in every city and region to which talented children can go, and ample financial help when they are ready to attend college.

Of course, it isn't clear that even under those circumstances there would be radical growth in the number of Americans who became research scientists, design engineers, musicians, management consultants, or (even if the world needed them) investment bankers and lawyers. So other responses are also needed. Perhaps the most ambitious would be to increase the numbers of Americans who could apply symbolic analysis to production and to personal services.

There is ample evidence, for example, that access to computerized information can enrich production jobs by enabling workers to alter the flow of materials and components in ways that generate new efficiencies. (Shoshana Zuboff's recent book *In the Age of the Smart Machine* carefully documents these possibilities.) Production workers who thus have broader responsibilities and more control over how production is organized cease to be "routine" workers—becoming, in effect, symbolic analysts at a level very close to the production process. The same transformation can occur in personal-service jobs. Consider, for example, the checkout clerk whose computer enables her to control inventory and decide when to reorder items from the factory.

The number of such technologically empowered jobs, of course, is limited by the ability of workers to learn on the job. That means a far greater number of Americans will need good health care (including prenatal and postnatal) and also a good grounding in mathematics, basic science, and reading and communicating. So once again, comfortably integrating the American work force into the new world economy turns out to rest heavily on education.

Education and health care for poor children are apt to be costly. Since poorer working Americans, already under a heavy tax load, can't afford it, the cost would have to be borne by wealthier Americans—who also would have to bear the cost of any income redistribution plans designed to neutralize the polarizing domestic effects of a globalized economy. Thus a central question is the willingness of the more fortunate American citizens—especially symbolic analysts, who constitute the most fortunate fifth, with 40 percent of the nation's income—to bear the burden. But here lies a Catch-22. For as our economic fates diverge, the top fifth may be losing the sense of connectedness with the bottom fifth, or even the bottom half, that would elicit such generosity.

The conservative tide that has swept the land during the last decade surely has many causes, but these economic fundamentals should not be discounted. It is now possible for the most fortunate fifth to sell their expertise directly in the global market, and thus maintain and enhance their standard of living and that of their children, even as that of other Americans declines. There is less and less basis for a strong sense of interclass interdependence. Meanwhile, the fortunate fifth have also been able to insulate themselves from the less fortunate, by living in suburban enclaves far removed from the effects of poverty. Neither patriotism nor altruism may be sufficient to overcome these realities. Yet without the active support of the fortunate fifth, it will be difficult to muster the political will necessary for change.

George Bush speaks eloquently of "a thousand points of light" and of the importance of generosity. But so far his administration has set a poor example. A minuscule sum has been budgeted for education, training, and health care for the poor. The president says we can't afford any more. Meanwhile, he pushes a reduction in the capital gains tax rate—another boon to the fortunate fifth.

On withdrawing from the presidential race of 1988, Paul Simon of Illinois said, "Americans instinctively know that we are one nation, one family, and when anyone in that family hurts, all of us hurt." Sadly, that is coming to be less and less the case. •

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The Global Zeitgeist Checklist: England

1. LONG TO REIGN OVER US ✓
Her. (No, not the Queen.) Ronald Reagan changed American politics; Margaret Thatcher changed British life. And she's still here, with no end in sight. But on her tenth anniversary, she is perceived as suffering from *folie de grandeur*, symbolized by her already immortal announcement of a recent family arrival with the words, "We are a grandmother." Her latest free market reforms of the medical and legal professions are seen as either courageous or reckless (take your pick) exercises in intellectual consistency: giving Tories a taste of her favorite medicine. But even the zealously free market *Economist* can't figure out why she wants to privatize the water system.

2. HORSING AROUND ✓
Royal bonking. The *Sun*, Rupert Murdoch's tabloid, obtained but ostentatiously didn't publish "intimate letters" to Princess Anne from the Queen's equerry (whatever that is), a "debonair" naval officer. The implication is that they are, in the Britishism, "bonking." The nation asks: What does this portend for the royal marriage to Captain Mark Phillips, who has been linked—not very plausibly—to Pamella Bordes (see below)?

3. SHUT UP, HE EXPLAINED ✓
Harrods. A roguish entrepreneur named Roland "Tiny" Rowland and two mysterious Egyptians named the Al-Fayed brothers struggled for ownership of the famous department store. The Al-Fayeds won, in 1985. Rowland says they cheated. The *Observer*, a Sunday newspaper Rowland owns, published excerpts of a secret government report saying, basically, that he's right. Within hours, the government got a judge to forbid the *Observer* and everyone else from discussing the report—even these sentences could get you arrested for bringing this copy of TNR through customs at Heathrow—and the media complied, even though copies of the pre-injunction *Observer* are all over town. Very eerie, to an American.

4. SECOND TIME FARCE ✓
Pamella Bordes. So far the former Miss India and high-class hooker (£500 a pop) has been "linked" with two Conservative members of Parliament (who hired her as a "researcher"), two prominent newspaper editors, and a Libyan intelligence officer. According to *Private Eye*, when the editor of the *Sunday Times* dropped her, she went to his apartment (to which she had a key) and cut the crotches and armpits out of all his suits. At first it seemed a strange coincidence that this story emerged at the same time as a movie about the similar Profumo affair 26 years ago. It turns out that the sudden explosion of publicity was engineered by a public-relations consultant whom Bordes had paid £10,000. You can think of that as 20 nights' hard work, or as a modest fee on the reported £300,000 a tabloid has paid her for her story.

5. YOU CAN'T GET THERE FROM HERE ✓
Traffic. The downside of the Thatcher boom, for its yuppie beneficiaries, is sharing the boom with everyone else. Commuting horror is the main subject of office chat. Everyone cites statistics to the effect that it took less time to get across London in the Pleistocene era. Meanwhile, down in the tube (subway), the human density has reached Tokyo levels, though the squalor and filth they complain of are nothing compared with New York. At least there are polite signs saying things like: "WHY IS THIS ESCALATOR NOT FUNCTIONING? This escalator is not functioning because it is under repair." Oh.

6. TROUBLE IN LEGOLAND ✓
Architecture. Hatred of architects is becoming a national passion, comparable to Americans' hatred of lawyers. Prince Charles has made outspoken attacks on modern architecture his special cause. They're about to tear down a horrible public housing project aptly nicknamed "Legoland" (designed by James Stirling), an event that is taking on the same symbolic value as the blowing up of the Pruitt-Igo high-rise project in St. Louis two decades ago, except that Legoland was only completed in 1975.

7. SOLID AS THE BANK OF ENGLAND ✓
Interest rates. They're up more than five percentage points in a year (to over 13 percent), in a country where all mortgages are floating-rate, so most people are directly affected. Yet the griping is remarkably subdued, even though there is no independent Federal Reserve and the elected government is directly responsible. The Chancellor of the Exchequer went out of his way last week to say he would raise interest rates further if necessary to curb inflation (now up to eight percent). There, in a nutshell, is the difference between Thatcher and Reagan-Bush. Imagine any American politician, for that matter, delivering unpleasant news so forthrightly.

8. THE RICH ARE DIFFERENT ✓
Wealth. The *Sunday Times*, in a rip-off of *Forbes*, recently published a list of the 200 richest Britons. Despite the Thatcher revolution, old money still rules. The most startling statistic: 55 of the 200 actually went to Eton.

9. FICTIONARY ✓
The new Oxford English Dictionary. A complete record of the English language? Pshaw. Volume One, brought to you by the letter "A" (as they say on "Sesame Street"), was on display in a local bookshop. I tried to think of a word with both classical and modern meaning, to check out their nuances. But "asshole" is unlisted. Now I don't know what to think about Newt Gingrich.

10. NO RUSHDIE ✓
The Satanic Verses. This one's almost off the charts. Some say the author's in Pimlico, some say he's in another London neighborhood called Chalk Farm, but most have forgotten all about him. The Ayatollah's genius was in knowing not just how quickly a firestorm of publicity can be ignited, but also how quickly it can die out. The story's over, for everyone except Rushdie, trapped inside a very good novel he can never write.

MICHAEL KINSLEY

The Zeitgeist Checklist is a creation of Charles Paul Freund.

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Speaking Frankly

Much has been made of the explicit sex scene in **Little Vera** (International Film Exchange). Well, it's not all that explicit, but it's in a Soviet film and therefore notable. Also, much has been made in the current *Playboy* of the leading woman, Natalya Negoda, although there, too, nudity is not complete. The nuisance in all this pother is that it distracts from the major points: *Little Vera* is a good film, and it's frank about something more surprising in a Soviet film than sex—youthful malaise.

Vera is 18, daughter of a truck driver and a shop foreman, who lives with her parents in Zhdanov, a seaport in the south. She is waiting around for a notice of college admission, about which she cares little, and is being pursued by a young man, about whom she cares less. The narrative is slim, but it doesn't need much more body because it supplies what's needed, a ground for moving—burrowing—into Vera's life: her drifting, her constant quarrels with her parents, her use of coeval friends as refuge from her parents, her meeting with a handsome young man who overwhelms her.

If all this sounds familiar, that's precisely why it's surprising in a Soviet film. The only elements in the story that could not easily be transposed to America are the fact that the young man, Sergei, moves into Vera's family's apartment—into her bedroom—before marriage and that a quarrel with her father, in which Sergei is stabbed, delays but does not cancel the marriage. The rest—the breach between generations in which we understand both sides—is grimly recognizable.

The film's blend of "American" and "European" elements continues throughout. The food, the Gorkian closeness of the small apartment, the habitual drunkenness of the father (which is almost matched by his daughter), the physical slammings, suggest Eastern Europe. But on the family dining table is Beefeater gin. On Vera's wall is a photo of Meryl Streep and Roy Scheider. The music she likes is American. The MTV in her hangout is in English.

The candor about these details—including a mention of AIDS—is as striking as the candor about the theme of youthful disaffection. The sole mention of Soviet ideals comes when Vera murmurs to Sergei, "We have a common goal, Communism." At that moment she is clad in a bikini and is wriggling across his body on a beach. (And what a beach. Dirty, littered with metal scrap.)

This is a first feature film, written by Maria Khmelik and directed by Vasily Pichul, who is only some ten years older than Vera, who was born in Zhdanov, and who grew up in an apartment much like the one we see. He went to the Moscow Film School for six years, then worked in TV and made some shorts. (He is currently making another film with Negoda.) How fortunate—for him and us—that Pichul's filmic coming-of-age coincides with the arrival of *glasnost*, so that he could deal openly with what was evidently uppermost in his mind. We can't assume that all Soviet youth is like Sergei and Vera, but those two are certainly credible to Russians. *Little Vera* has been a smash in the U.S.S.R.—50 million tickets in the first three months, we're told—and it can't all be attributed to a few bosom shots.

Would *Little Vera* be interesting if it were set elsewhere—somewhere in the West? Less, surely. Still, it would be affecting. Pichul is skillful and sympathetic, and he knows how to mesh environment with theme. His use of the cramped apartment is the most deftly managed confinement since Godard went into Jean Seberg's hotel room in *Breathless*. The graceless city and, especially, that beach are used trenchantly but without emphasis. (However, Soviet color photography is still many versts behind the West.)

And Pichul chose good actors, whom he directed well. Negoda is no mere sex bomb. She understands Vera completely and plays her from a secret center of desolation, which comes out as aggression and languor. Andrei Sokolov, as Sergei, has just the right tone of offhand truth-telling. Lyudmila Zaitseva and Yuri Nazarov, as Vera's parents, give renewed life to those recurrent characters, the fa-

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Chocolat. *Autobiography. Claire Denis, a young French filmmaker, uses a surrogate to revisit Cameroon where she grew up and to discover the changes. A quiet, clear talent. (Reviewed 4/17/89)* **Hanussen.** *The makers of* Mephisto *and* Colonel Redl *investigate a clairvoyant whose rise coincided with Hitler's. Unrealized in theme but lush in atmosphere. (4/10/89)* **Lawrence of Arabia.** *Restored and reissued, it's now being recognized as the magnificent work that it is. (2/20/89)* **New York Stories.** *Three of them, two of them good. Martin Scorsese heats up an account of a SoHo painter's love life, and Woody Allen tells a distended but funny Jewish-mother joke. Between them comes Francis Coppola's vacuous tale of a little girl in a luxe hotel. (3/27/89)*—**SK**

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ther and mother baffled by their child and by changing standards. These characters are, in fact, not a 20th-century invention. At the tragic end of Hebbel's *Maria Magdalena* (1848), the heroine's bewildered father says, "I don't understand the world any more." Many times in this film, Vera's father could have said the same thing.

Rob Nilsson is an original. Of his previous work I've seen *Signal 7*, set in a taxi garage and improvised by a group of actors who made it, under Nilsson's hand, less a slice of life than a chunk of it. Now he has made **Heat and Sunlight** (Silverlight Entertainment) about the last 11 hours of a love affair.

It's Nilsson's story, but all the dialogue was improvised by the cast, headed by Nilsson in the leading role. He's a man of about 40 with a strong face, and his performance overflows with power—of love and passion and frustration. Consuelo Faust, as the dancer who is finishing off the affair, is excellent; all Nilsson's agony about her is utterly believable. Don Bajema, as Nilsson's patient and impatient friend, is well up to the film's level of authenticity.

The trouble with the film is that it wanders and sputters. The story is at least partly autobiographical, we're informed, and a good deal of what's included is more significant to Nilsson than to us. For instance, much is made of the fact that the hero, a photographer, spent a good deal of time in Biafra in 1970, almost 20 years earlier; large blowups of starving Biafrans hang on his wall; film clips of Biafrans are included. At first we think some contrast is being made between huge catastrophe and private grief, but this theme is never crystallized.

When the film stays close to the breakup of the affair, it's hot and fine. But the viewer can't help sensing some self-dramatization—and not only in the couple's final love-making, which was directed by Nilsson with himself in the scene and which makes the sex in *Little Vera* look pallid. There's a distinction—felt, rather than definable—between soul-searching and self-display; and this gifted filmmaker sometimes blurs the two.

Comment on Academy Award broadcasts is largely superfluous, but two matters in the last extravaganza stand out. Several of the couples who presented awards are live-in lovers, known or professed. This was not a TV first; still, it would have been incredible a few decades ago. It made me hope that film-world lovers of the past who have suffered from scandal—say, Ingrid Bergman and Roberto Rossellini—were getting the broadcast on UHF. Then, at one

You deserve a factual look at. . .

Those "Moderate" Arab States

Should the U.S. sell them advanced weaponry?

Should we sell sophisticated armaments to the so-called "moderate" Arab countries? Recently, Saudi Arabia, usually considered the leader of the "moderate" Arabs, turned to Britain for the biggest arms contract ever. Many are concerned that the U.S. Congress, being reluctant to allow unlimited arms sales to the Arabs, is depriving the U.S. of lucrative business.

What are the facts?

■ The Arab states boast today one of the largest, most deadly and most sophisticated concentration of armament the world has ever seen, surpassed only (and not by all that much) by the arsenals of the two super-powers. And the buildup of arms continues incessantly—making one wonder how these essentially backward countries can possibly absorb and utilize all this weaponry. Excepting the oil-rich Gulf countries, most of these Arab states can fairly be described as economic basket cases, with social and demographic problems that seem almost unsolvable. Still, they dedicate a large share of their meager resources to the acquisition of ever more deadly and offensive weaponry, instead of putting them into the service of building their countries and uplifting their populations.

■ Saudi Arabia, the kingpin of the "moderates," is an immensely wealthy but sparsely populated country. It fields an army of only 72,000 men, but has 190 military planes and 550 tanks—just about the largest ratio of military hardware to military manpower in the world. Until recently, the fiction was maintained that it needed this enormous arsenal in order to defend itself against the "threat of Iran." But now that Iran is prostrate, this can no longer be alleged, and even the most naive no longer believe it. As King Khaled put it quite bluntly: "When we build our military power, we have no designs on anybody, except those who took away our land and the holy places in Jerusalem, and we know who they are!"

■ "Moderate" Saudi Arabia has participated in every war against Israel, from the birth of the state in 1948. It has never made peace with Israel. It is the principal paymaster of Syria, Israel's most fervent enemy, and of the PLO, which is sworn to the destruction of Israel. It is the main player in the worldwide Arab boycott of Israel, whose purpose is the destruction of Israel's economy. Yet, Saudi Arabia, already armed to the teeth and beyond, has just acquired batteries of super missiles from China. They can reach every point in Israel within minutes and can be armed with chemical and atomic warheads. And Saudi Arabia has squadrons of fighter planes at its air base in Tobuk, just one minute's flying time from Israel.

■ But Saudi Arabia's "defense" needs are insatiable. It has just concluded an arms deal with Great Britain amounting to $27 billion, the largest ever negotiated by that country. It includes at least 40 Tornado fighter planes, 80 Westland helicopters, a minimum of six Sundown minesweepers, the construction of two major air bases, and much more. It is an enormous package and has only one purpose: to be part of the coordinated force that, it is hoped, will eventually destroy Israel. The remarkable thing is that Britain will not sell any arms to Israel, because it feels that it could "destabilize the region."

■ But those bare statistics refer only to some of the so-called "moderates." Including the self-proclaimed non-moderates, tiny Israel, the size of New Jersey, with 90% of its population concentrated in an area the size of metropolitan Indianapolis, faces one of the most daunting and fearsome military machines the world has ever seen. Counting only Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Libya and Egypt, Israel faces 17,265 tanks, 2789 combat aircraft and 3 million armed men. And that is before the huge sale of military material by Britain, missile deals with the Chinese, and other weaponry in the pipeline.

The concept of the "moderate" Arab states is a myth. The Arabs are single-mindedly determined to destroy Israel. They are spending hundreds of billions of dollars in order to attain strategic superiority to Israel, and then to accomplish its destruction. Israel is the only viable strategic asset the United States has in the entire area. Those who sell weapons to Israel's enemies—foreign countries and American companies—are playing into the hands of America's enemies. We do not find the Soviet Union selling weapons to the enemies of *its* allies. Why should the United States be any less straightforward in its foreign policy? If Israel were vanquished, the Persian Gulf with its vital resources, the entire Middle East and the Mediterranean Basin would fall under the unquestioned dominion of the Soviet Union.

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point, Edward James Olmos and Max von Sydow came forward to present an award together. Before they began, Olmos said, touchingly, that he was honored to be standing there with this actor. Obviously unexpectedly, Olmos seized von Sydow's hand and kissed it. It seemed appropriate.

Edward Rothstein on Music

Don't Shoot the Piano

The piano, as Max Weber noted, was a fundamental piece of "middle-class furniture." Unlike a simple chest of drawers, the piano in the 19th century served as a means for expanding social possibilities, for displaying material and spiritual accomplishment, for cultivating taste and learning. It was never considered a luxury or an indulgence; it was as omnipresent as television is today. In 1867 the *Atlantic Monthly* pointed out that "almost every couple that sets up housekeeping on a respectable scale considers a piano only less indispensable than a kitchen range." " 'Tis wonderful," Emerson noted, "how soon a piano gets into a log-hut on the frontier."

In his classic *Men, Women & Pianos* (now unaccountably out of print), the pianist Arthur Loesser emphasized the piano's role as an anchor for domestic life. Lessons were required of every eligible maid and every aspiring bachelor. Etiquette books explained how a woman should play for an admirer, and how a gentleman should escort her to the keyboard. "In many a humble home throughout our land," said President Cleveland, "the piano has gathered about it the most sacred and tender association." It was the home's second hearth, the locus for play and display. The piano sat in the parlor, silent but ripe with possibility, imposing in its shape and seductive in its sound, admired when quiet, compelling when given voice.

The piano was such a powerful presence partly because of a belief that, as one journal put it in 1909, a "proper study of music" led to a proper "formation of character." Here is a description from a 1926 issue of *The Etude*: "Good principles of morality, integrity, sobriety, truth, honesty, clean living, and patriotism, planted daily in the child mind while that mind is elevated, enthused, and spiritualized by means of inspiring music, means that . . . our crime problem will diminish enormously with oncoming years." The optimism even affected such organized charities as the Music Settlement Schools, which considered the art as important to the poor and disfranchised as basic material needs.

But the piano was not only a sentimental emblem of family life. It also introduced into the home some of the very dangers it was used to guard against. The music of Schumann and Brahms and Beethoven is music of risk and disorder as well as of resolution and aspiration. The piano could arouse fears of seduction as well as hopes of courtship. Etiquette books for social piano playing were needed because of the risks latent in unbounded play. In "The Kreuzer Sonata," for example, Tolstoy inverted the piano's image of domestic propriety, making it the inspiration first for adulterous passion, then for murder.

There was, in fact, no way to separate the piano's darker energies from its edifying influence. The very act of practicing was associated with suffering as well as elevation. The pianist Hans von Bülow spoke of crucifying his fingers in piano practice, "like a good Christ." For every 19th-century rendition of "The Maiden's Prayer," there was a "Mephisto Waltz"; for every concert hall, a cathouse. For every genteel phrase given us by piano culture—"soft pedaling an idea," or using a listener as a "sounding board"—there are others that refer to more punitive matters: the "piano bench" was a convict's worktable, a "Chicago piano" was a gangster's machine gun, to "play the piano" at one time meant to be fingerprinted. This shadowy side of the piano made the instrument's ultimate goal of transcendence all the more forceful: the mastering of body and machine and manners, the overcoming of obstacle and risk for the sake of aesthetic and social accomplishment.

Clearly, piano manufacturers were not just supplying an instrument. They were creating an icon. And they did not create the demand; they fed it. In 1909, 364,545 pianos were made in the United States by 295 manufacturers and 69 equipment supply houses. These instruments included the most subtle along with the most crass. For every manufacturer as dedicated to creating high-quality instruments as Mason & Hamlin or Steinway & Sons, there were a dozen others that produced pianos for the log cabins and parlors of the middle class. One of the most influential was Joseph P. Hale, who cheapened the production process but knew how important the piano's name and status had become. He offered "vanity" stenciling, custom-labeling instruments or inscribing them suggestively with names like Steinmay, Stannay, Shumway, Steinmetz, Stanley and Sons—signs of aspiration if not accomplishment. Hale accounted for an eighth of the American piano industry by the 1880s.

But at the dawn of this century, when the piano was at the peak of its prestige, it also became most vulnerable. First came the player piano, whose automatic mechanism offered, as one advertisement put it, "perfection without practice." By 1923 player pianos represented 56 percent of all pianos made. Then came the phonograph and the radio, permanently undoing the piano culture. There were 295 piano makers in the United States in 1911; there were 81 in 1929. Then the Depression seemed to seal the piano's fate (there are now fewer than ten American manufacturers). Once classic pianos—Mason & Hamlin, Chickering—were sold and resold until they bore no resemblance to their familial origins. The piano was never to have the same importance again.

A recent book, *The Piano in America, 1890-1940* by Craig H. Roell (University of North Carolina Press), focuses on the years of this decline, offering an abundance of original research. It is a flawed work, but it gives serious attention to the transformations of the piano business that went along with the social and musical decline of the instrument: the consolidation of small companies, the development of a managerial class in the piano business, the responses to a new consumer culture.

Roell ends his account on an optimistic note; and indeed, in the 1950s, it appeared that with postwar family life, the piano was going to re-establish itself. But since 1978 sales of pianos in the United States have dropped by a third to levels less than half those at the turn of the century. And within that smaller market, the old American firms are no longer the major participants. Most American manufacturers have gone bankrupt, leaving a handful as shadows of their former selves. Baldwin diversified into clocks and circuit boards and Kimball into furniture. Within the last two decades, Japanese and Korean companies have come

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to dominate the world market with mass-produced, rather than hand-crafted, instruments. Meanwhile, the real future of the piano industry seems to be in electronic keyboards, which now represent nearly half of all instrument-related sales in the United States (more than twice the revenue generated by the instrument now sadly reduced to being called "acoustic"). The piano continues to be heard on the concert stage, and is still tirelessly played in the practice rooms of conservatories, but it is no more than just another instrument.

There was, in the midst of this decline, only one American company that remained an anomaly—suffering from the piano's slippage, no doubt, but maintaining its standards and its heritage: Steinway & Sons. Producing about 5,000 pianos a year in its New York and Hamburg factories, Steinway holds almost a monopoly on the artistic use of the piano; it has represented the highest achievement of the piano-making art. The Steinway piano was sold as if it were itself a transcendent object: "the Instrument of the Immortals," intoned the advertisement. It was praised by Lizst, Wagner, Rubinstein (Anton and Arthur). It is still the instrument through which we hear nearly all piano repertory on record and in concert.

This has given Steinway an importance far beyond its size. There are small European makers, such as Grotrian and Bechstein, who claim to produce pianos that can compete with Steinway. But these are companies of lower sales and far lower profiles. They also have different stylistic aspirations; they lean more to gentility than to public proclamation, more to variety of voicings than to focused tone. The Steinway has long since eclipsed other tastes in pianos. Its bright, projective treble and its muscular, resonant bass have defined our notion of the piano's sound.

But now Steinway risks following the rest of the piano industry into decline. If Steinway standards fall further than they already have, the musical costs will be high. There is no other manufacturer currently able to take Steinway's place. The concert artist will have to settle for instruments with less sensitivity and tonal variation. The listener will have to settle for indefinite loss, never knowing what nuances have been left unrevealed by the pianist's compromise.

When Steinway was founded in 1853 by the German immigrant Heinrich Steinweg, the piano represented a sort of merger between business sense and aesthetic taste. The true "fathers" of the Steinway business tradition—the sons of the founding immigrant—evenly divided those tasks. William Steinway was a brilliant master of commerce and public life—a virtuoso in the marketplace, selling the instrument through exclusive dealers and promoting it through deals with artists. He built a Steinway Hall for concerts, booked artists for American tours in small towns, mining camps, and big cities, and treated the piano as if it could not be dissociated from the society it served. When he died in 1896, New York's mayor ordered the flags flown at half mast.

His brother Theodor, on the other hand, was a pure "piano man"—a Teutonic genius, stern, uncompromising. He was responsible for 41 of the 55 patents granted Steinway by 1889. Theodor summed up his attitude to the piano in a German maxim he hung over his desk, which read: "Who knows his trade is a journeyman; A Master is he that invents the plan; An apprentice, each and every man."

The success of the company was the result of an intricate balance between William's marketing savvy and Theodor's devotion to the craft. The Steinway company correctly treated the piano as the archetypal family instrument—developed by a family dynasty, for family players, representing family ambitions. Every innovation in the instrument was made by craftsmen whose love of the piano was as great as their love of its manufacture. At its prime, the factory had its own orchestra, along with a set of loyalties that came with a "guild hall" tradition.

Eventually, however, a guild of such skilled craftsmen became more difficult to sustain. This and various other problems, including lack of capital, led to the sale of the family firm to CBS in 1972. At the time, CBS seemed like a powerful and prestigious home—a modern rescuer of the Steinway from the forces of modernity. CBS tried to keep Steinway immune from corporate pressures, to prevent it from becoming a mere institutional appendage. Steinway became the beneficiary of huge capital investments.

But in fact the Steinway's fate under CBS is grimly revealing, for it indicates how fragile the traditional piano manufacturing operation is, when the instrument itself is linked not to a surrounding culture, but only to a surrounding market. Once CBS entered upon its own era of decline, Steinway was plagued by bureaucratic confusion, changing strategies, and parades of efficiency experts. There were four Steinway presidents in just 13 years. "Quality control" slipped. The decline of the Steinway in the 1970s was a replay of the decline that every other great piano suffered decades earlier. There were pianists who began to say that the Steinway was no longer a great

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instrument; the market in half-century-old rebuilt Steinways boomed.

But Steinway had a second chance, largely because of the strength of its tradition. Many now credit Lloyd Meyer, the final president of Steinway under CBS, with a revival of quality in 1982, or at least the stirrings of such a revival. But even that second chance was disrupted when CBS announced that it was going to get out of the instrument business. That announcement alone nearly completed what earlier sloppiness and mismanagement could not. Consider the irresponsibility of the sale, compared with the importance of the company sold. In 1984, the year of the sale, Steinway was earning $8 million on $60 million in revenues. The sale, involving at least 18 interested parties, dragged out over a period of ten months. There were rumors that the factory would be sold only for its real estate value. CBS claimed to be concerned over the future of the company, but finally it needed cash to fend off attempts to take it over. And so CBS sold Steinway & Sons in haste, along with three other musical instrument companies, for less than $50 million—a much smaller sum than was offered earlier by serious devotees of the instrument.

The buyer, Steinway Musical Properties, pledged to continue making the world's greatest instrument. But in reality it seemed to have had no interest in anything but Steinway's investment potential. Like William and Theodor Steinway a century earlier, two brothers are among the owners, John and Robert Birmingham, who possess a large fortune from the sale of their father's fuel company to Texaco. Another investor came in later, Bruce Stevens, who is now the president of Steinway. But unlike William and Theodor and their relatives, none of the three figures now making decisions about the future of the instrument has any background in the piano business, in instrument manufacture, or, except in the most casual way, in music itself. Robert described the purchase to me: "I was looking for a business, and we heard Steinway was for sale. The attraction was a tremendous trade name with a product equal to it, which is a very rare thing."

He said that they began to "smell the flowers" after the purchase, but it is clear the fragrance was less potent than the "product." "It's really different from selling oil; it's black, but that's about it," Robert said, explaining the novelty of his new business. There was no talk about the instrument itself, only a reiteration of its "reputation" and "trade name"—as if they could be exploited without the obsessive dedication to the instrument's innards. With an eye on production schedules and unit sales, a new head of manufacturing was hired, Daniel Koenig, who had no knowledge of the piano whatsoever when he came to the company after 21 years as an engineer at General Electric working with steam turbines and motors.

Among Robert Birmingham's major goals for the Steinway was not to restore it to its splendid artistic position. Instead, he aimed to increase factory output by at least 50 percent, while looking into Steinway's opportunities in the booming electronic keyboard market. Both goals, experienced piano makers say, could have an extraordinarily harmful impact on the piano itself. Even during the hard times of the Depression, Steinway turned down millions of dollars that were offered for the license to its name for toasters and refrigerators.

For the first time in its history, the company is entirely guided by a philosophy alien to a century of piano invention and craft; for the first time, there is no one in an authoritative position at Steinway & Sons with a musical vision of the instrument or experience in its manufacture. And there are real problems that require precisely such vision and such knowledge. How can a business that has traditionally involved craftsmanship, devotion, and artisanal values continue when those are all so rare in the workplace? How can a factory be run along old apprenticeship lines and guild hall rules when the cultural and economic environment has changed? How can Steinway deal with these issues in an industry that has suffered serious decline in importance? Surely it was just such issues that led to the family sale of Steinway in the first place.

Unburdened by historical precedent or historical knowledge, the management of Steinway & Sons is unambiguously taking the commonplace view of "modernization," jettisoning what seems outmoded. "From my point of view," Koenig told me, "the piano is essentially an engineered and manufactured product." He would like to "debrief" the old hands and teach piano manufacture, as he put it to me, in a "textbook manner." The piano could then be treated as a melodious washing machine. "I get uptight about advertising hand craftsmanship and things like that," he said. "To me, it doesn't indicate quality, but a stubbornness, holding on to the past."

In many industries such radical modernization would be suitable, indeed revolutionary; but the piano is a subtle washing machine indeed. Will the decision to have the iron plate finished out of house, for example, affect, even slightly, the control that Steinway has always exercised over this crucial contributor to the piano's tone? What about changes in the ways in which the felt is bent onto hammers, or the ways in which the wood is aged? Of course change shouldn't be shunned. But this instrument evolved over 250 years; and when it succeeded in the sorts of musical expression demanded from it, that evolution slowed. Every change became as much a risk as a promise. But Koenig told me: "The design of the piano has been too damn stable. It hasn't changed since 1920 or so, and neither have the manufacturing operations."

He controls a $75,000 annual budget for research and development. The result of this R&D will depend on the company's vision of the instrument—and how deep an understanding of its tradition it is willing to absorb. My impression is that the new Steinway & Sons would be very happy to marry its inherited reputation with the manufacturing methods and quality of a very different instrument: the Yamaha. Yamaha makes almost 200,000 pianos a year, compared with Steinway's 5,000. But even Yamaha knows that there is a price to such efficiency. Once Yamaha decided to take on Steinway in the high end of the American market, to produce a concert grand and make it available to artists in competition with Steinway, they treated the project in an entirely different fashion. They chose different materials, pace, workers, and procedures, emulating Steinway even as Steinway now seems to want to emulate Yamaha. Yamaha is not about to replace Steinway on the high end—its effort is still at a fledgling stage—nor may it ever be able to reproduce the powers and achievements of Steinway at its prime. But there may soon be little enough to imitate.

The company is already injuring the remnants of the artisan culture upon which the Steinway's virtues depend. There are reports of cut corners from the factory, along with complaints about quality control. The R&D department is now populated with engineers without piano manufacturing background. The most knowledgeable practitioners are leaving the company or being dismissed. Their knowledge will be simply lost—or transferred to competitors such as Falcone, a small piano firm in Massachusetts, most of whose buyers are disenchanted Steinway prospects and some of whose important employees are emigrants from the once imperial Steinway & Sons. The founder of that company, Santi Falcone, has ambitions of rival-

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ing Steinway itself, though with fewer than 200 pianos made so far it will be some time before his achievements can offer any consolation.

It will also be years before the attitudes now enshrined at Steinway have an effect on the instrument. But by then it may be too late to restore the unique powers of the instrument of the immortals. The problem is that there is more information in the old-fashioned "guild hall tradition," more knowledge about the building of the instrument and its nuances, than the current management is ever likely to get from "debriefing" the old-timers. The deep knowledge in a craft often involves gestures and approaches that are not even conscious, but are schooled over long practice. Replacing them with textbook-style instruction is like teaching the playing of the piano by creating a list of principles about muscle movement. "An apprentice, each and every man," read Theodor Steinway's motto. Without that attitude, the piano he helped invent might really become just another piece of middle-class furniture.

A Life at Death's Door

BY WILLIAM H. GASS

Wittgenstein: A Life Young Ludwig, 1889-1921 by Brian McGuinness

(University of California Press, 321 pp., $22.50)

The Wittgenstein home in Vienna, it was said with some exaggeration, held seven grand pianos, a condition that certainly stamped it as Viennese. It also housed five sons, the first three of whom were suicides: one by drowning, one from a gunshot, one through poison. The two sons who remained often considered taking their own lives, too, but, through some inadvertence, did not. The family's three daughters fared better in this regard because, although just as much was expected of them, it did not include measuring up to quite so many marks or reaching quite such stressful heights.

In those days, if music appeared to be the rosy flush of Vienna's fame, suicide seemed its fever. The newsworthy surface of society was regularly ruffled by someone's dramatically premature demise. There was Otto Weininger, whose crackpot book on *Sex and Character* Wittgenstein, in his early years, admired; Ludwig Boltzmann, important for his work in statistical dynamics, and one with whom, equally early, Wittgenstein wished to study in Vienna; the poet Georg Trakl; notables like the architect of the Imperial Opera House, Eduard van der Null; aristocrats of a rank as elevated as the Baron Franz von Uchatius, including actual imperialities such as the Crown Prince Rudolf himself—each a distinguished suicide.

For the old, dying is dismal and takes the shine from death. One has grown accustomed to the succession of small disappointments that make up most of life, so the failures that have followed one about like a smelly, undismissible mutt now resemble a faithful, if antic, companion. The young, however—still so near the time when they were not alive that not being alive again exerts a powerful fascination—cannot help but look at the threat of the years to come and expect them to be as marked by loneliness, remorse, and triviality as those that they have so far survived. Success turns down no soothing bed of rest either, since it can seem to supply but the starting place for yet another, more arduous, climb. Life, they have to wonder (since they once had such hopes for it), life comes to . . . is for . . . what? And if life is so precious, why is so much of it—everywhere around them—habitually, extravagantly, wasted? If life is a meaningless chore, it were well one's chores were concluded promptly, and the mess swept. Thus the suicide skips dying and goes to death as through a door—a door he may slam, if he likes, as he leaves.

In households like the Wittgensteins', what is remembered of the mother is often pale as an old print tacked to an out-of-the-way wall: its image gray, stiff, still, ornately ovaled. It is the father who is the moving Figure, the Presence, the Ghost of the Olden Days. It is his chains that will send their rattle through the rooms and bind the occupants to a presence that is past, yet a past that will not release its outlived days to die away in rings of

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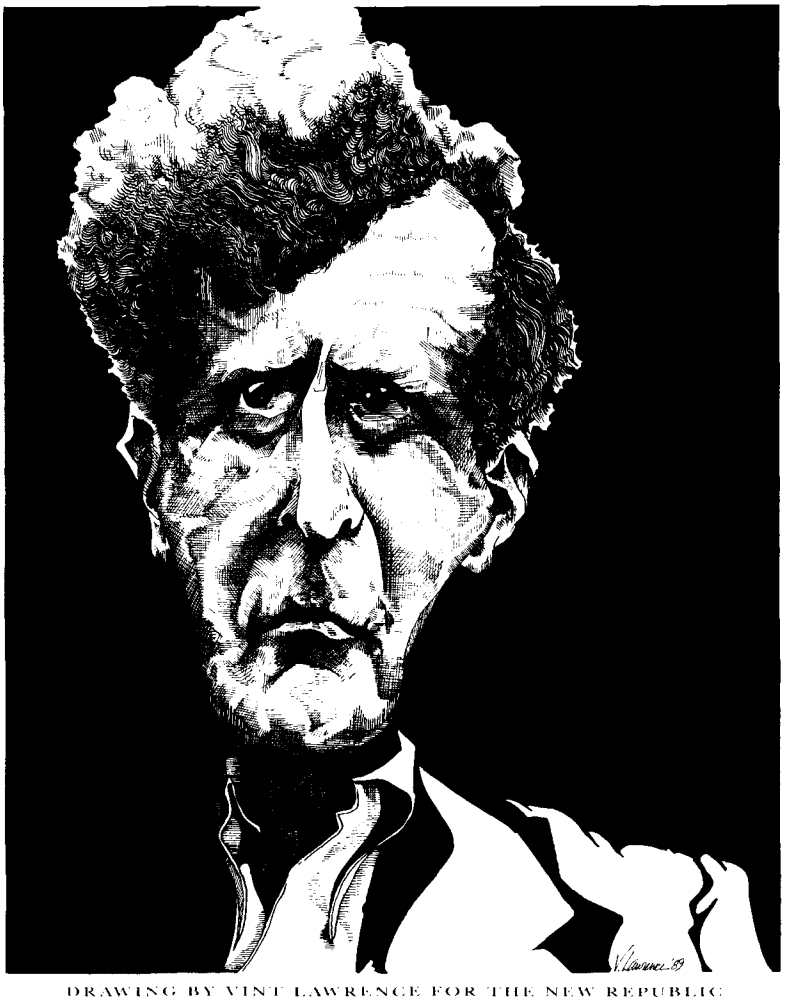
weakening reverberation, but one whose hold grows greater by being gone.

Gone, or for the moment far away, the Presence is enlarged by the erasure of what seems irrelevant until it can be simply felt as moral authority, heard as stern commandment, seen as shining example. That the Presence picks his teeth, is forgetful, frequently falls asleep and is afraid of dreaming: these foibles are mislaid, every sign of weakness is turned to point the other way. Whatever is ordinary fades until only a giant is remembered, one that is cross and condemnatory, implacable, its sentences certain, its judgments final. One thinks of the anger, the terror, the cringing obedience, the need to please, that Kafka's father inspired, and how the father's frown became a crease across his son's face, and how loathsome the son's sense of servitude was to both of them. For such a son, too, a role was reserved, defined for him from the beginning, waiting for him like his plot in the cemetery: to husband a wife, to father her children, to head a household, to emulate a feared figure, to overcome, to succeed . . . to be what he could not compel himself to be.

Karl, who would occupy the Presence in this case, had a vigorous intelligence with an energy to match, and set a brisk, if not impossible, pace. He was quick of both head and hands, decisive, charming, bold, brutal (he became a successful industrialist), good-looking, confident, arrogant, witty (more German than Jew, he was loyal to his culture, not to God), a despiser of failure in any form, and of every form of humbug. Like the dyspeptic Flaubert, who compiled a dictionary of thoughtless thoughts in common use, or more likely Karl Kraus, who publicly exposed them, he snipped outstanding imbecilities from periodicals and papers and, in later life, sent them to his son, Ludwig, who took custody of the collection.

To Karl's beleaguered sons an early death must have seemed the inherited fate of the family. In any event, Ludwig faced a life, as we read of it, which was remarkably free, almost from its inception, of those pleasures that fasten, like lions, young teeth to their meat; that tempt them to pranks, into forbidden explorations, or lead them to enliven dull routine with frivolity and flamboyance. There was, along his road, but rare success and frequent failure: success that was usually deceitful and temporary, and failure he took so to heart it could scarcely beat beneath the burden of it.

Dutifully enough, Wittgenstein begins the study of mechanical engineering in Berlin, but shortly finds an excuse to enrich his education in Manchester and on the moors near Glossop, where he designs and flies his own kites during aeronautical and meteorological experiments. This is 1908, when he's 19, and the flying machine is more than a dream. Although he had the inventor's handyman mind, in addition to the abstract intelligence he would later display, his attention quickly turned from the kite to the motor that would drive it, and then, by stages that were by no means direct, to physics and the formulas that expressed its principles (from the craft to its engine, from the propeller to the propeller's torque and the algebras of air, from the movement of molecules finally to the behavior of numbers). Wittgenstein flew to the fundamental as naturally as his kites and balloons rose in the wind, so that even when he whistled Mozart, the dexterity of his tongue and lips was still in the service of the logical articulation of an idea. One of his more dazzling—and puzzling—notebook entries runs: "Musical themes are in a certain sense propositions. And so the recognition of the essence of logic will lead to the recognition of the essence of music." Schopenhauer, whom Wittgenstein had been reading, would have put it the other way around: "Propositions are in a certain sense like musical themes. And so the recognition of the essence of music will lead to the recognition of the essence of logic."



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Taught by tutors, and with consequently little training in how to plod through a discipline from one bleak peak to another, it was easy for Wittgenstein to appear to drift toward whatever was prior and basic and presumably free of the clutter of applications. Very soon his father's funds were financing a sojourn in Cambridge, where he took in Bertrand Russell's lectures the way some people might take in the Taj. In no time he was suffering from that fever for first principles we call philosophy; that heavy hunt for ultimates that only skepticism, or the petty grind and pretentious rites of graduate schools, can cool.

Initially an eccentric, "unknown German," the presence that Wittgenstein eventually made known to Russell, and then to Moore and Keynes, to Lytton Strachey and other members of the rather notorious Cambridge society called "The Apostles" who endeavored with mitigated success to recruit him, was a furious jostle of warring qualities—of emotional highs and succeeding lows, of course, ranging from intense excitement to despondency—yet an active, elbowing crowd of all kinds of other contraries as well. He was shy, but quick to correct his superiors. He had a poor opinion of himself, but he repeatedly required special treatment, and he regularly expected, for himself, an ungrudging suspension of

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the rules, since as low as he often felt he'd sunk, most of mankind still lay beneath him. If others understood their true condition, they would feel terrible, too. His misery, however, wanted no competition.

Wittgenstein's manners were formally aristocratic and coolly correct, except when he was excoriating someone's errors, because his pursuit of truth was often an excuse to be rude. He would feel bad about his behavior and apologize, but not without reminding his victim of the nearly sufficient reason that had provoked him. He believed that menial tasks were humbling and generally good for you, except when menials did them, and then they became demeaning. His taste was for an elegantly simple life, with the simplest part of it, of course, an absence of the demands others might make of him. He approached people as warily as an animal from the wild, one whose recurrent and natural impulse is to run away. Although he seemed unusually self-absorbed, driven-in upon himself as one in pain, he sought in his studies the solution to problems of apparently the most impersonal and objective sort. He prized solitude, especially for his work, and was instantly furious when any course of thought was interrupted, yet he dropped round to Russell's rooms nearly every midnight to bounce ideas off those patient walls, or to recount his weaknesses and consider suicide. As Russell writes in 1912:

> Wittgenstein is on the verge of a nervous breakdown, not far removed from suicide, feeling himself a miserable creature, full of sin. Whatever he says he apologizes for having said. He has fits of dizziness and can't work—the Dr. says that it is all nerves. He wanted to be treated morally, but I persisted in treating him physically—I told him to ride, to have biscuits by his bedside, to eat when he lies awake, to have better meals and so on. I suppose genius always goes with excitable nerves—it is a very uncomfortable possession. He makes me terribly anxious, and I hate seeing his misery—it is so real, and I know it all so well. I can see it is almost beyond what any human being can be expected to bear. I don't know whether any outside misfortune has contributed to it or not.

Stubborn, arrogant, critical, demanding, prickly, solipsistic: Was it only his intellect that saved him from being principally a pain in the ass? Russell initially found him "obstinate and perverse." Very soon, however, he was referring to Wittgenstein, with affection, though understandable condescension, as "my German." "My German friend threatens to be an affliction." Was he only a crank or really a genius? "My German, who seems to be rather good, was very argumentative." "My German engineer, I think, is a fool."

Consulting my own brief memory of the man, I am inclined to think it was not Wittgenstein's brilliance by itself that impressed Moore, Russell, Keynes, and the others, but the fact that he did indeed burn with a bright, gemlike flame; that his commitment was not merely quirky, but intensely real; that he brought to his investigations the desperate energy and concentration of one whose mind has drawn a noose around its body; because, if his reasoning failed to reach the necessary degree of clarity and insight, if it showed itself to be more than momentarily incompetent, then Wittgenstein might not decide upon another day of life, but choose suicide instead—hanging his head in order to throttle some sinfully inadequate thought.

The Wittgenstein of the *Tractatus* (of whom the first volume of Brian McGuinness's biography treats) might be characterized philosophically as a romantic rationalist. He is a "rationalist" because he believed in grounds and foundations; because he thought that these were to be found in the fundamental principles of logic; because these principles, in themselves, were easy enough to understand, and could probably be grasped in a single mental intuition, so that what difficulties there were would have to be ascribed to the shortcomings of the thinker, not to an inherent darkness or complexity in the proper objects of his thought; because one could make the move from logic to the world without damaging or mislaying all the latter's furniture. He is a "romantic" because he believed that thinking clearly, correctly, sincerely, completely was the central human obligation, and a moral struggle; that one made oneself, consequently, into a soul that could see, and then saw—then plumbed and discovered—just as Rilke, for example, felt he had to become a poet first in order to write his poems, rather than become talented, wise, or strong by trial and error, effort and exercise.

In the realm of morals and manners, Wittgenstein disdained principles and programs, justifications and excuses. Talk was a screen for who knew what weakness. He made most of his decisions in secret, because (although he would pace up and down through his miseries with Russell) most talk disguised and entangled; it led others to think that they had a say; it encouraged "saws"; it proceeded from partial truths. One's acts

In Your South American Dream

The Argentine is there again.
In every dream he dies, and dying spills
his tea across the pages of his work.

You are the waitress, always pour the tea.
He leaves a generous tip of postage stamps
and railroad maps with ciphered messages.

You find him handsome; other men wear thin
broadcloth shirts and read the morning Times.
You can't imagine them in Buenos Aires

smoking cigars, joining carnivals. . .
but every dream ends with the man face down
in tea and steam, and then interrogations.

Why did he come here? Who drank with him?
The busboys start to clear the dining room.
You watch them pass with the linen in their arms:

it has his shape, the color of his suit,
clues for the police to turn around.
Instead they leave, silent and satisfied.

You think this will be an easy dream.
Its syncopations make hard sounds
across the boneless tundra of your ears.

JENNIFER ASHTON

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ought to spring spontaneously from the sort of person one was: calculation suggested subterfuge, obedience suggested servility. Hence his frequently brutal frankness, his lack of social concealment, his mysterious reversals of course and changes of heart.

Character was something that simply showed itself in the way one thought, in the way one lived. Style and idea were inseparable; so he rarely troubled to hide the fact that what was most important to him was the course and quality of his own mind. It was, after all, his art. His impatience with what he took to be lackadaisical reasoning, philosophical obfuscation, or any weakening of intellectual resolve was severe and immediate, and based upon the identification of knowledge with virtue, and of the right to exist with the claim of creative accomplishment. It was always all or nothing with him.

I do not believe that Russell had wings, so he can't have taken the young Austrian under one, but he did gradually grow fonder of this intense intelligence. The picture of their relationship that emerges from McGuinness's pages does Russell great credit, I think. A hint of jealousy (or perhaps envy) shows up later, but this is only a speck on what is otherwise an unblemished record of magnanimous behavior on the part of the older, more established, and more esteemed philosopher. Russell was a man, furthermore, of quite a different cut and character than Wittgenstein: sensual, worldly, keenly observant, calculating but capable of real devotion, and able on occasion to achieve the impulsive life that Wittgenstein longed for and, paradoxically, planned, yet could never achieve because his personality was far from free and easy, because it was, instead, neurotically impacted.

Wittgenstein makes immense demands upon Russell's time, his patience, his energy, his ego. In the name of philosophical truth, the student is mercilessly, sometimes scornfully, critical of his teacher's labors. Russell takes the criticisms to heart, however, only to find the easy flow of his work slowed, its course altered, its publication consequently postponed. Although Russell sometimes allows himself an impatient rejoinder, his appreciation of Wittgenstein's genius never weakens, and he welcomes his surly friend's return to friendship whenever it occurs. Russell reports to Lady Ottoline Morrell:

> We were both cross from the heat—I showed him a crucial part of what I have been writing. He said it was all wrong, not realizing the difficulties—that he had tried my view and knew it wouldn't work. I couldn't understand his objection—in fact he was very inarticulate—but I feel in my bones that he must be right, and that he has seen something I have missed. If I could see it too I shouldn't mind, but as it is, it is worrying, and has rather destroyed the pleasure in my writing.

Russell became aware of Wittgenstein's mystical tendencies very early. Still, his ardent young pupil's love of logic can hardly have prepared the positively inclined Russell for Ludwig's later romance with informality, or his repeated religious temptations. He did not immediately realize that Wittgenstein, in removing reason from the realm of religion, was really protecting faith. An urgent need for salvation pursued Wittgenstein always, and it intensified immediately following the First World War (during the time the *Tractatus* was being translated, titled, prefaced, and published by his English friends), when—among his choices for the future—suicide, school teaching, and a somewhat monastic withdrawal were the favored alternatives.

Wittgenstein distinguished himself as a soldier; and despite the hardships of many campaigns, the crassness of the common soldier, the repeated bollixes of a decrepit bureaucracy, the cultural limbo of military life—conditions that he patiently endured—the war perversely supplied him with something he desperately needed: an objective hell that could replace his private one, and an equally dangerous outside enemy. In the army there were not only an order of sorts, aims of several kinds, discipline and routines; there were hands other than his own hand raised against him; there was death as it might come to a comrade as well as to himself, a death unwilled, even unexpected. Thus Wittgenstein performed under fire with that coolness that comes when a world gone mad asks for sanity from the asylumed, and through hardship and valor he recovered the ordinariness in himself, felt as his fellows felt, and had his small sins swallowed by more substantial woes.

Wittgenstein tells us that when he was about 21, at a performance in Vienna of a mediocre play, the necessary word was nevertheless said (as if a random note had completed a chord in his heart), so that the possibility of a religious life, stripped of the theology that had previously rendered it unacceptable, became suddenly attractive and real. The revelation, if that is what it was, lay in the assertion by one of the characters that he was, in effect, "beyond the fell clutch of circumstances," that nothing bad could happen to him. Wittgenstein gave this bit of bragging a semi-Stoical interpretation, and it reappears later as one of the consequences of the *Tractatus*. The world is an ensemble of facts. Nowhere, among these facts, are there any values to be found, nor are any values connected to them by whatever devious means a philosopher may imagine. To all the chief questions of culture "it" is totally deaf; it neither promotes nor prohibits; it neither disdains nor cares. It's it, and that's that.

Nothing that I decide to do can turn a value into a fact (as existentialism endeavors to), but I am certainly free to affirm the world, as Nietzsche exhorts us, or to deny it, as Schopenhauer inclines. If that liberty were real, however, why would I be tempted to view existence despondently when joy, instead, were happily at hand? In a suicidal mood, Wittgenstein writes to his friend Engelmann:

> In fact I am in a state of mind that is terrible to me. I have been through it several times before: it is the state of *not being able to get over a particular fact*. It is a pitiable state, I know. But there is only one remedy that I can see and, that is of course to come to terms with that fact.

I think it is reasonable to suppose that anyone concerned to give an account of Wittgenstein's life would be determinedly interested in what—precisely—that fact was: its nature, its etiology, its consequences. Reluctant as McGuinness's pages are even to turn, they nevertheless present us with the picture of a pathologically driven personality whose prickly petulance and swings of mood we are forced unpleasantly to place alongside his philosophical achievements, whose passionate presence we can only intermittently glimpse in the letters of others, or in some lines of his own, but rarely in the biographer's pale, pussy-footing prose, through which little that is powerful pushes, not even the harmless letter "p," like a daffodil or a daisy—a letter that might stand for the point of it all.

All that McGuinness says about Wittgenstein's homosexuality is contained in two footnotes, which, if they could have been pushed a bit further away, would have found themselves entirely off the page. The first, which refers to the philosopher's sexual preferences for the first time, we must wait until page 196 to receive. Then we are slipped the information in an astonishing "by the way." "This is perhaps the place . . . ," McGuinness blandly begins. The question that elicits this "revelation" is whether Russell disapproved of Wittgenstein's homosexuality, whether it played any part in the cooling of their relationship. Probably not, is McGuin-

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ness's reasonable conclusion. But why, we have to wonder, were Russell's letters to Lady Ottoline Morrell on that subject not quoted, when so many others were? Why wasn't the issue raised when it was central to the story being told, rather than far after the fact? Why did we have to learn at this time that "intrigue" is the biographer's code word (borrowed from Keynes) for homosexual flirtation, since it might have helped us understand his earlier account of Wittgenstein's election to the Apostles? And why did we have to pass through two-thirds of the book under the impression that our subject had a lively soul, but no body?

The second footnote occurs 100 pages later, near the end of this volume, and it concerns that one "particular fact" that Wittgenstein could not get over. To the suggestion, offered by another writer, that the philosopher was experiencing guilt about his homosexual encounters, McGuinness does everything for his subject but take the Fifth. "I have not paid much attention to this hypothesis," he says:

> It is above all an unnecessary one, as I hope I have shown, and it is in fact totally incompatible with the frank discussion of Wittgenstein's difficulties which I for one have had with close friends of his from that time.

It is, however, the only hypothesis that makes sense. Instead of the offending proposal, McGuinness would have us accept hopeless simplicities instead: that Wittgenstein was tempted to suicide by the example of his brothers; that he felt he was not perfect; that he was in despair over the human condition; and that he was principally kept from the deed by the offense he knew it would give to his faith—factors that may have been important, certainly, and even sufficient, if we knew what they meant. McGuinness may have had frank discussions with Wittgenstein's friends, but he has not had one with us. We have no other choice but to imagine a man driven along the edge of life by sexual shame and unspeakable guilt, half-hoping for the excuse (that combination of cowardice and courage) that would take him over the edge—out of grief into expiation.

Some of McGuinness's shortcomings as a biographer can be attributed to inexperience and a lack of literary skill. He often cannot make up his mind what to include, what to leave out, what quietly to decide, what openly to debate. There are indications that he has postponed—for a second volume—divulging certain information that we may badly need now. Although the Russell material is wonderful, he can't do much more than hand it to us. In any case, he is unable to revivify a scene or create any kind of narrative sweep, nor does he weave thought-lines and life-lines together very well (it is admittedly difficult); and he seems happy to refuse every opportunity to conjecture. His discussion of the *Tractatus* (as well as a number of other technical points) is not nearly careful enough to interest a professional and will be wholly confusing to an interested layman.

Furthermore, McGuinness's coyness concerning the sexual life of his subject leaves the reader wondering whether he has given no account of such a life because Wittgenstein didn't have one, or because evidence is massively absent, or because the facts are being suppressed in order to protect the philosopher's "good name," as well as the good name of unnamed others. Since McGuinness gives us no help with these conjectures, except by his silence to encourage them, the reader loses confidence in his guide, and begins to suspect the sources he cites in addition, since Wittgenstein's followers have frequently been jealous about the ownership of ideas, and overly imitative and protective of him, even to the point of aping his stammer, his gestures of intellectual effort, his expressions of despair, and pretending to his impatience, aspiring to his arrogance. It is not just one disciple who betrays the master. All of them do.

There are a few vocations (like the practice of poetry or the profession of philosophy) that are so uncalled for by the world, so unremunerative by any ordinary standards, so inherently difficult, so undefined, that to choose them suggests that more lies behind the choice than a little encouraging talent and a few romantic ideals. To persevere in such a difficult and unrewarding course requires the mobilization of the entire personality—each weakness as well as every strength, each quirk as well as every normality. For every one of those reasons that a philosopher offers to support the principle he has taken in to feed and fatten, there will be in action alongside it, sometimes in the shade of the great notion itself, coarse and brutal causes in frequently stunning numbers, causes with a notable lack of altruism and nobility, causes with shameful aims and antecedents. This is to be understood and accepted. Valéry's belief that every philosophy was an important piece of someone's autobiography need not be rejected as reductive; for whatever the subliminal causes and their kind are like, the principle put forth must stand and defend itself in a stockade of arguments, it must make its own way out into who knows what other fields of intelligence, to fall or flourish there.

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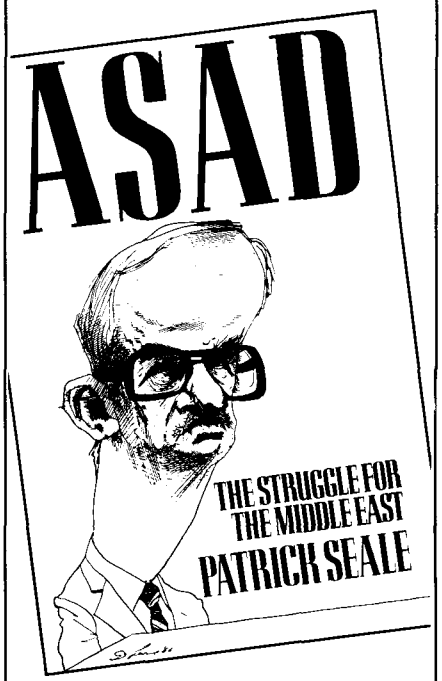

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The psychological space between a work of intellectual will like the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* and the energies and organs supporting it, between the fears and foolishness and childish avowals of the unsophisticated self and the forms of its sophistication: these are far from thoroughly explored or understood. It seemed to me there was a chance in this book to shorten some of that distance. But the steps taken have been tentative, as if the full truth about the breath within the trumpet might sour the tones the trumpet told, as if against the force of Wittgenstein's uncompromising search for form there was still some strength for shame.

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Daddie Dearest

BY MAUREEN DOWD

First Father, First Daughter: A Memoir by Maureen Reagan

(Little, Brown, 432 pp., $19.95)

OK, I miss Maureen Reagan. I miss her Valkyrean girth, her checkered love life, her noisy temperament, and her California eccentricities. As Maureen would say, it's sure as sunshine that I feel lower than a snake's belly that she left town in Daddy's wake. Sweet, shy Dorothy Bush LeBlond, after all, would never choose as her Secret Service traveling pseudonym anything like Maureen's lurid, poetic-hallucinogenic "Ramona Mandrake."

Recall the good times. Remember the way Maureen used to carry a stuffed toy puma named Oscar in her tote bag as she stumped for GOP candidates, arranging it on the back of her airplane seat, buying it tiny sunglasses for Western swings. And remember, after her father was elected president, that she appeared in a commercial for a mail-order acne lotion with the tag line, "Let me tell you, it certainly made my life easier during that frantic election campaign." And what about the time she found out that "the boys," as she called her father's presidential advisers, were referring to her behind her back as the 600-pound gorilla? She tracked down the guy who thought up the nickname and told him she knew about it, barking afterward in her best George Raft style that she "had been pushed aside for too many years not to have learned how to push back."

And remember how everybody made fun of her when she revealed that she'd been visited in the Lincoln Bedroom by a ghost in a red coat? At the time the papers suggested that her parents thought she was really weird; but eventually it was established that Nancy Reagan had turned the White House into Occult Central—an atmosphere of direct access to Scorpio Rising where any spectral ex-president could feel at home. And let's not forget Maureen's inimitable moments as Republican Party co-chairman when she suggested that Oliver North and John Poindexter be court-martialed. Or when she let loose at the 1988 New Orleans convention, flinging plates at a meeting, hurling insults at aides (who then quit), capping it all at a delegate reception by calling the League of Women Voters "The League of Women Vultures."

Ah, the Mos of yesteryear.

I don't miss Maureen as much as I miss Nancy, of course. Washington is a much duller place without its own scheming, manipulating, glittering "Mommy" de Merteuil to reign over the dangerous liaisons of politics. Georgette Mosbacher, the Nancy-in-waiting recently anointed by the Washington elite, just doesn't seem up to the Smiling Mamba role. And so far Barbara Bush and her Wonder-Bread brood have shown little potential for the Greek tragedy and sitcom zaniness that Washington craves. So we're left with fond memories of the Reagan dynasty, with a growing nostalgia for the eight-year saga of hypocrisy, envy, loathing, loving, vengeance, delusion, and forgiveness.

Our thirst will not be slaked, however, by *First Father, First Daughter*. The prose is scream of consciousness (about Reagan's first inaugural, his daughter recalls: "It often surprises people when I tell them this, but there was no *by-golly-gosh-gee-whiz!* to what I was feeling at this time, not even a hint of mild disbelief. I didn't have to pinch myself."), with trivia tumbling out all over the place, from hotel caterers she has known and loved to fun facts about her dog's snowsuit and Frisbee. Worse, the memoir is too airbrushed to be a satisfying remembrance of things past. The writer (the dictator, rather: the origins of this kind of prose are obvious) takes her place in the great literary tradition of pocketing a big advance and glossing over the dishy parts.

Maureen doesn't detail her stormy relationship with her mother, Jane Wyman, and doesn't even mention her mother's comeback role as the evil wine baroness Angela Channing on "Falcon Crest." She talks about her mother as being severely reserved, describing how Wyman sent her away to boarding school when she was seven, to a Catholic convent school on the East Coast (after making her convert to Catholicism), and then insisted that she stay on the East Coast for college. "Maybe she didn't want me so close to home after she'd gotten used to having the entire country as a buffer," Maureen says.

Maureen talks about her brief acting career—"I went out on so many auditions I began to think of changing my middle name to Rejection"—but she does not flesh out one of the most salient points of her young life, the time when she played a hooting hillbilly in a 1964 Elvis Presley movie called *Kissin' Cousins*. Nor does she even acknowledge the great twilight struggle to overcome the mutual hostility with her size-four stepmother.

In interviews in 1980, when her father was running for president, Maureen addressed the fact that Reagan's remarriage had damaged relations with his two older children, partly due to Nancy's desire to wipe out mentally his first marriage. "She is very much in love with him and would like to be the only person there ever was," Maureen told the *New York Times* about her stepmother. "They don't need anybody else but themselves." And she was more withering about the relationship with Nancy with a *Washington Star* reporter. "We get along fine," she said, guffawing. "We get along really *terrific*."

But in her book Maureen offers no honest commentary, only damning circumstantial evidence. She tells of Nancy's elaborate efforts to woo her young self, and her little brother, Michael, when she first began dating Reagan. It appears that Nancy was willing to do anything. She sang songs from "Call Me Madam" with Maureen over and over as they rode in her father's turquoise convertible. She visited Maureen at her boarding school.

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She took over Maureen's most hated chore and whitewashed thousands of feet of redwood fence at the ranch her father owned then.

The camaraderie ended, however, the moment Nancy Davis became Nancy Reagan. The wedding was at William Holden's house, and the children were not invited. Maureen puts a brave face on the change in her status. She recalls that she was delighted to have a baby sister, even though Reagan did not bother for quite some time to mention to Patti that she was not his firstborn.

When Maureen was in her late teens and Patti was seven or eight, the author recalls, she visited her father and stepmother at their Pacific Palisades home. Her adopted brother, Michael, had just moved in for a spell:

> When Michael moved in, the folks had just gotten around to explaining to Patti that he was her brother, which pleased her quite a bit, so Patti came up to me at one point during my visit and said, "Did you know that Michael is my brother?"
>
> And I said, "Yes, of course I know that. And do you know what that makes you and me?"
>
> "No," Patti said, "what?"
>
> "That makes you and me sisters."
>
> Patti burst into tears—actually it was more like an eruption—and she ran from the room crying, "No, it doesn't! No, it doesn't!"
>
> I felt deflated. Dad was quite embarrassed when he explained to me later that afternoon, "Well, we just haven't gotten that far yet."

Maureen was in for equally rough treatment at the hands of her father's campaign consultants for his gubernatorial race. Stuart Spencer and William Roberts concluded that Reagan's previous marriage, his divorce, and his children would be a political liability. So, as Maureen remembers it, Spencer delicately broke the news. "Stu Spencer suggested to my husband that I dig a hole and pull the dirt in over me until after the election. Once again I was made to feel like I was in the way, only this time there was a team of paid consultants encouraging those feelings." She called her father to "sound him out" about being "rubbed out." His reaction, she said, "was predictable." "If you pay someone to manage a campaign," he said, "then you've got to give them the authority to do it as they see fit."

Maureen stayed involved anyway on the fringes of the California race. She wanted, as she puts it, to keep her "political chops wet." At one point she was even allowed to introduce her father at a San Diego event. She was given his official biography and some remarks prepared by his campaign staff. "Ronald Reagan and his wife Nancy have two children, Patti and Ronnie," the bio read. "For me to read aloud those words, as his daughter, would have been the ultimate humiliation," she observes. And she didn't.

If Maureen was angry at her father, she doesn't say so here. Like her father, she is capable of great spurts of self-delusion. She blamed any abdications of parental responsibility on others. Because she was shoved aside by her parents as a child and as an adult, the first three-quarters of her book has the feel of an Orange County dinner theater production of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, in which a ludicrously minor character places herself at center stage and offers a tiny sliver of reality.

Her chronicle of the central events—the breakup of Ronnie and Jane, the marriage of Nancy and Ronnie, Ronnie's race for governor and first three runs for the presidency—all of these are told from the standpoint of a pariah, of "an outcast," as Maureen calls herself. This is certainly not the memoir of an insider. The First Daughter's book often relies on press accounts. Since she has little inside information to impart—either she wasn't there or she prudently prefers not to piece together the moments she was present and thereby relive them—she gives a lengthy and less than interesting account of her time spent stuffing envelopes, running phone banks, and giving speeches.

For many years, her point of regard was that of a Republican volunteer "enhancing our grass-roots capabilities." "As Dad was adjusting to his new position," she writes of the time after he was elected governor, "I was becoming more deeply involved in the activities of the Federation of Republican Women, locally and nationally. An organizational dogfight was in full yip on the national level, which made our local jockeying of the previous year seem like the stuff of pups." Since she was not the beloved daughter watching the old man perform at close range, she takes the reader through her grueling travel schedule to prove to us (as she has tried frantically to prove to her father) that she is a good soldier who is not merely riding on her name. And to make up for her lack of insider gossip, she offers political commentary: "You have to remember that the 1960s, politically speaking, were a time of extreme polarization."

Before the Republican convention in Miami in 1968, she called her father to ask if the stories she was hearing that he might challenge Richard Nixon were true. It seems to have been a typical con-

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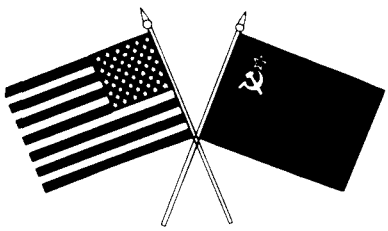

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versation, offering all the intimacy of a nationally televised press conference. "I've always said that the presidency seeks the man, and it is unseemly to impose yourself on the nominating process," he told his daughter. "The delegates will decide." Although she was not encouraged by her family to go to the convention, Maureen wandered down anyway and was ushered in at one point to see her father at the Key West house where he was staying. "You've got five minutes," a Reagan aide informed her.

It is an eerie thing, but in books written by people who were able to watch Reagan at close quarters, the man comes across as precisely the sophisticated version of Chauncey Gardner that he was in public. Even his dialogue behind closed doors is chillingly impersonal. His reactions to his own child are so canned that they could well have been devised and dispatched to her by his spokesmen.

Maureen writes without recriminations, though; she is not willing to jeopardize the closeness she has, at long last, won. But back during the 1980 campaign, the old Maureen was blunt enough with interviewers to comment about her father: "Let's put it this way. There are times when I question whether he cares for me at all." When it was pointed out by a reporter that, but for family ties, her feminist beliefs might lead her to prefer another presidential candidate, she smiled knowingly. "Well, you said it. You said it, babe." And yet in her book the new, muffled Maureen prettifies Daddie Dearest. Describing one of their exceptionally rare family dinners, Maureen glows: "He's like that, my father. Having all of his children at smile's length means more to him than I can ever hope to put in words on his behalf."

Maureen married a D.C. traffic policeman at 20. At the time, she told friends bitterly that Nancy had all of her father's attention and she had none, that if she married a cop 12 years her senior, that would surely get dad to pay attention. But the unnamed man turned out to be a bad, abusive husband. "It would have been so simple just to pull the trigger," she thought one day, as she held his service revolver, "but I knew that wasn't the answer." Despite horrible beatings and violent episodes, despite fantasies about setting her husband's bed afire during the year-long marriage, Maureen never called her parents for help. She has said in interviews that Ronald Reagan and Jane Wyman only learned of the abuse that she suffered when she sent them the galleys of this book.

INTENSITIES & ANALOGIES

by A.R. Thurar

The psychological reasons for everyday behaviors: Art, Drama, Love, Music, Religion, Sex, Sports & many others.

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Still, she is, as someone who knew her once said, a locomotive. She started at the periphery and steamed her way in. And eventually her big break came. Her father learned during his first term that he had a gender gap problem. Maureen was one of the few Republican feminists around, and the one who happened to be sitting across from him at the time. She could not change his mind about the Equal Rights Amendment, but she offered to help; and he took her up on it, making her a paid consultant to the party on improving his image with women. "I was glad all over about it," she crows. She ignored the white, male inner circle of Republican strategists who privately conceded that they still didn't believe much in the importance of women.

Not one to leave an opportunity unexploited, Maureen began to spend more and more time in the Lincoln Bedroom down the hall from her father, sometimes alone and sometimes with her third husband, Dennis Revell. She was so thrilled at having achieved "insider status" that she immediately began snitching all the matchbooks marked "The President's House."

Meanwhile, Nancy, whose staffers had once cautioned each other not to mention Maureen's name in the First Lady's presence, began to find common ground with the president's daughter. They were united, at the very least, by a shared hatred for Donald Regan. And by a shared disgust with Michael, who began sporting a T-shirt that said "I'M NOT THE DANCER" and excoriating Nancy for her "jealousy" of the president's grandchildren. And by a shared anger at Patti the sullen rebel, for writing a mordant roman à clef.

Maureen was the only child to campaign for Reagan's re-election. She joined with Nancy, finally, as best she could. There is a famous anecdote about Nancy feeling that Reagan had been "overstuffed" with facts after the first debate during the re-election campaign. Steaming, she confronted Michael Deaver the day after the debate and demanded: "What have you done to my husband?" In her memoir, Maureen gives herself this scene to play. The day after the debate, she writes, she walked up to Lee Atwater and snarled: "What have you done to my candidate?" Maureen also co-opts credit from Nancy on politics. Even though the First Lady was regarded as the force behind the transformation of Reagan from actor to president, Maureen takes the honors: "Keep in mind, it was me, a brash young woman of 20 with a flowering passion for politics, who had first told my father, over a rare lunch together in 1961, that I thought he could be president in 20 years. It just took me a while to convince him—and the rest of the country—that I knew what I was talking about."

Whenever Nancy was traveling, Maureen slipped into her stepmother's place at night in Reagan's study. Father and daughter sat in chairs, side by side, with dinner trays on their laps, watching TV. These were opportunities for Maureen to try desperately, once again, to score an inside scoop. But even in the inner sanctum, even with Dad wearing an open collar and slippers and with Maureen in the beloved Nancy's chair with Nancy's tray on her lap, it was hard. "Dad," Maureen asked him one night, as they were watching television at the height of the Iran-*contra* scandal, "do you think you are totally up to speed on this thing?" "Yes," he said slowly. "I think so."

From the White House residential quarters, poor little Maureen was finally able to wreak revenge on "the boys" who had been mean to her. She could take calls from "the little creep" Michael Deaver and not put him through to her father. She could tell Nancy to hand her the phone so that she, too, could lecture the "out-of-control Prime Minister" Regan about a poorly planned pep rally for the Nicaraguan "freedom fighters." "If the dinner table is the ultimate forum," she once said, employing a euphemism for dinner tray, "then I've got it."

Surely Maureen knew that her revelation that she was an abused wife would make news. But the real, shadowy psychodrama of her book is not about domestic violence. It is, rather, about an American political family falling apart, over and over and over. Being the First Daughter of her father's heart, it seems, was much more important to Maureen than being First Daughter of the land. For that reason she still tries, in this book, to preserve the shattered illusion of family for the man who was the master of illusion. Now that the White House is bustling with children and grandchildren, now that it is inhabited by a man genuinely engaged with his family, it seems more remarkable than ever that Reagan was able to project so successfully the image of a genial patriarch working tirelessly in the cause of "family values."

But the White House is a distorting place. It seems inevitable that the cycle

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of coattail-riding and self-delusion will begin again. Just as Maureen once ran for the Senate in California, much to the dismay of her father's coterie, so now George Bush, the eldest son of the president, is thinking about running for governor in Texas. In a recent interview in the *Wall Street Journal*, "Junior," a formerly little-known oil man, was asked if his father's ascendancy would give his ambitions a boost. He waved a hand breezily. "I don't need him to be elected governor," he said. He might consider the cautionary example of Maureen Reagan. The out-of-work 48-year-old Maureen still relies on her name, just as she did as a young performer with the children of other stars in a Vegas lounge act called "The Name's the Same." When Ronald Reagan signed up with the Washington Speakers Bureau recently, he made it a condition that his daughter be signed up, too.

MAUREEN DOWD is a reporter for the *New York Times*.

Trivial Pursuits

BY DAVID HENDRICKSON

The American Age: United States Foreign Policy at Home and Abroad since 1750 by Walter LaFeber

(W. W. Norton, 759 pp., $25)

In 1783 John Adams set down his idea "of the qualifications necessary for an American foreign minister." The ideal diplomat, Adams held,

> should have an education in classical learning and in the knowledge of general history, ancient and modern, and particularly the history of France, England, Holland, and America. He should be well versed in the principles of ethics, of the law of nature and nations, of legislation and government, of the Civil Roman law, of the laws of England and the United States, of the public law of Europe and in the letters, memoirs, and histories of those great men who have heretofore shone in the diplomatic order and conducted the affairs of nations and the world. He should be of an age to possess a maturity of judgment, arising from experience in business. He should be active, attentive, and industrious, and above all, he should possess an upright heart and an independent spirit, and should be one who decidedly makes the interest of his country, not the policy of any other nation nor his own private ambition or interest, or those of his family, friends, and connexions, the rule of his conduct.

Walter LaFeber, professor of history at Cornell University, has chosen Adams's counsel as the epigraph of his new history of American diplomacy, though it is not clear why. The work itself is a fast-paced narrative, with much in the way of colorful and amusing anecdote, frequently of a risqué nature. As the blurb states, it is no "dry as dust treatise." We are regaled with stories of Benjamin Franklin fondling the ladies at Versailles, of Teddy Roosevelt skinny-dipping in Rock Creek Park with the resident diplomatic corps, of a young Richard Nixon searching, with "systematic intensity," for the largest outdoor wooden toilet to throw into the flames of the annual bonfire rally at Whittier College.

Other famous skirt-chasers who have heretofore shone in the diplomatic order also make an appearance in *The American Age*; but there is almost nothing on the law of nature and nations, to use Adams's antique expression. No sense is given of how the principles of ethics might relate to the conduct of statecraft. The public law of Europe, insofar as it is mentioned at all, is generally treated as an irrelevance and a bore. The letters, memoirs, and histories of American statesmen are culled not with the idea of elucidating the diplomatic principles that justified their own conduct, or challenged the conduct of their opponents (as all the Adamses did), but for the humorous, idiosyncratic, or horrifying tale that will move the story along. This treatment may prove popular with college students. Whether it constitutes a satisfactory examination of American foreign policy is another matter.

That Americans have been an expansionist people for the greater part of their existence (until the late, hard times) forms the principal theme of the work. Before the 20th century, this expansion took both territorial and commercial forms; after the war with Spain in 1898, and the acquisition of overseas territory that followed, American leaders desired no more land. Still, "the all-purpose solution of more overseas markets" continued to dominate American thought, according to LaFeber, and the change after 1900 was one of degree, not kind.

The American inability to adjust to revolution, apparent even in the late 18th century and the source of colossal blunders in the 20th century, forms the second motif of the work. Though LaFeber never says so directly, it appears that the insistence on the Open Door (initially for the export of surplus goods, later for surplus capital) has been more responsible than anything, in his view, for the generally uncomprehending and hostile attitude toward revolution in the 20th century, with all its fateful consequences.

An expansionist foreign policy has also meant, in practice, the steady aggrandizement of presidential power at home. From James K. Polk and William McKinley to Franklin D. Roosevelt and Ronald Reagan, an imperial foreign policy has inevitably required an imperial presidency. LaFeber's third major theme is the deception and unconstitutional practices in which most of the so-called "great" presidents engaged, preparing the way for the massive abuses of the cold war.

The tone of the work is unrelievedly critical. Though American statesmen are often given credit for the canny exertion of power, and alternately appear as clever, brilliant, and shrewd, one is not left with the sense that American diplomacy was ever morally upright or in the service of a worthy cause. There was only a perpetual and restless desire of power after power, and market after market, ending finally in strategic overextension. No reader would be so dull-witted as to draw from LaFeber's account the conclusion that there was anything in the American diplomatic tradition in which one might take a just pride.

This outlook is not only annoying, it also leads the author into serious errors of interpretation. The whole Federalist and Whig tradition in diplomacy is neglected or misunderstood. (Hamilton was an "embryo Caesar," Webster was on the take. That about sums it up.) Frequently it is difficult to determine whether the inadequacies of the book's first part, which breezes through a century and a half in less than 200 pages, owe more to ideological perversity, to sloppy historiography, or to the insidious process of abridgment; but there are a number of embarrassing mistakes. LaFeber's account of Jefferson's Louisiana diplomacy (c. 1801-03) is almost en-

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tirely mistaken, and the preludes to the American Revolution and the Civil War are off-key. The book improves once we reach the 20th century, to which most of the study is devoted, but serious methodological flaws remain even here. Despite much quotation from contemporary historians and a useful bibliographical apparatus, there is no attempt to characterize the rival interpretations that have long battled for our allegiance; the student would never learn that every episode under examination has been the subject of prolonged and complicated debate.

Perhaps the major source of analytical error in the book stems from LaFeber's failure to understand the principle of countervailing pressures that has continually been at work in American politics. The most striking feature of American political discourse is its finely balanced structure, in which the alternatives that make up the purpose and meaning of the nation are regularly counterpoised at the highest level. Liberty has been the primary ideal, and has stood at various times in opposition to empire, slavery, power, and equality. What is true of our political thought has also been true of our politics, both foreign and domestic. There the principle of checks and balances has been elevated to a status far higher than it enjoys in any other political culture.

Since LaFeber trains his spotlight throughout on the low side of high politics, all these important themes get lost in the shadows. Instead we are treated to a cynical and simplified view of the American past. The approach is unfair to the historical objects of the author's scorn (even the Devil, as Milton knew, deserves some sympathy). And it deprives the reader of learning how unbridled ambition often entailed its own corrective, whether because it pressed too hard against constitutional restraint, congressional pressure, or public opinion.

American territorial expansion, for example, can only be understood as a process shaped by competing pressures. The acquisition of more territory was always an attraction for some, but it was also hemmed in by powerful sectional and constitutional forces. It took some gigantic piece of good luck, as Jefferson had over Louisiana, or some extraordinary will and cunning, as Polk showed over California, to override them. In each case, misplaced anticipation attended the event, and ironic result came in the aftermath, as in Jefferson's enlargement of executive and national power that ensued from the Purchase, and the general failure to foresee how territorial expansion in 1846 would pose a threat to, rather than enhance, the power of the slave states.

The war with Spain in 1898—the third great chapter, after 1803 and 1846, in American territorial expansion—had consequences that were equally unanticipated, leading both to a renewal of isolationist sentiment among the public at large and to second thoughts about imperialism even among its great advocates in 1898. This peculiar cycle of high hopes and dashed expectations anticipates the American experience in Vietnam, and should be told with an eye toward its paradoxical and recurring rhythms.

So, too, the Open Door. Its importance cannot be denied, but it was not without its rivals. From the outset, the desire to open up the closed trading systems of the European powers always had a competitor in the "American system," which aimed at the creation of a large internal market and therefore at avoiding dependence, in Hamilton's words, "on the combinations, right or wrong, of foreign policy." The desire for commercial expansion was often attended by the view that commerce was a source of corruption by virtue of its tendency to involve the country in the quarrels of Europe, as happened in 1812 and 1917. The idea achieved a fatal expression in the Smoot-Hawley Tariff of 1930, and in the neutrality legislation later in the decade, which made an attempt to close off the road to war paved by the "merchants of death."

Revulsion to the closed trading blocs of the 1930s, which had disastrous consequences for material well-being and political stability throughout the world, in turn brought about the reformed liberal capitalism of the post-World War II era. LaFeber is too busy asserting the centrality of the Open Door to take account of these historical ambiguities. And he has little grasp of an important lesson of the past half-century: that the open commercial and financial system that has prevailed since 1945, for all its precarious instability, is much better than the closed system it displaced.

Was it the Open Door that led to the hostile American attitude toward revolution in the 20th century, in some degree reversing the tendency in the 19th century to celebrate such revolutions as our own progeny? Here, as elsewhere, LaFeber does not undertake a systematic investigation of the problem. Like other partisans of the revisionist interpretation of American foreign policy, his tendency is to place almost exclusive emphasis on the expropriations of American property and the closure of internal markets that all revolutionary regimes have thought indispensable in their various projects to reconstruct man and society. This surely accounts in part for American opposition to the march of revolution, in Russia, in China, in Cuba, in Iran. But it is far from the whole story. Equally important, though LaFeber virtually ignores the theme, has been the American commitment to democratic practices and individual liberties. Hostility to revolution as it was actually conducted was perfectly understandable, and in large measure deserved.

Perhaps this opposition to revolutions had to issue in a great catastrophe, such as Vietnam, before a more prudent assessment was made of our stake in standing athwart them. Still, the fundamental American mistakes arose not so much from the hostility to revolution, which always lay in the logic of our commitment to an open system, as from the particular expression that this hostility often took. One error lay in a misunderstanding of the limitations of force, together with a considerable degree of pride and hubris (as in Vietnam); another, in the conviction that it was necessary to extirpate the rank weed wherever it made an appearance, regardless of its impact on the balance of power (as in the misbegotten war against the Sandinistas).

The saddest part of the whole story is that the architects of intervention in Vietnam and Nicaragua failed to appreciate the inner strength of their own system. They could scarcely imagine how that system might, by peaceable means, gain a foothold even in the heavily fortified camps of our adversaries (as it has, however tentatively, in much of the Communist world today). Nor did they really anticipate the happy irony by which the crimes of the Communists against their own peoples would lead, by an invisible hand, to material impoverishment, cultural retrogression, and political anemia. The true faith of Americans is, or used to be, that our system might triumph because of the inherent attractiveness of its organizing idea, because of its conformity with the natural disposition of mankind.

The use and threat of force have been indispensable, of course, in the maintenance of a balance of power, in part to ensure our physical security, in part also to provide the protective umbrella under which the system of natural liberty might assert its primacy. It has always been good policy to resist revolutionary regimes when they have threatened this equilibrium. No objection can be made to those policies of moderate containment by which the balance has been

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maintained in the postwar world. We have gotten into trouble when we have gone beyond that requirement, and made war in the absence of a compelling necessity.

A clear case of such necessity was the threat of the totalitarian powers in the 1930s. That is the context in which LaFeber's harsh treatment of the exercise of presidential power must be considered. Given the sheer awfulness of the totalitarian phenomenon in the 1930s, when gangsterism ruled in Eurasia and the moral forces that Wilson celebrated proved impotent against rampant criminality, there is something seriously wrong with a treatment of American foreign policy that summarizes the lessons of those years by pointing to FDR's domestic spying and back door to war. The utter failure of our studied attempt at neutrality is hardly mentioned. In summing up his case, all that LaFeber can manage is a quotation from J. William Fulbright that "FDR's deviousness in a good cause made it much easier for [President Lyndon Johnson] to practice the same kind of deviousness in a bad cause." This is a curious rendition indeed of the "lessons of the 1930s."

More generally, LaFeber's treatment of presidential power shows little awareness of how presidents have often acted to impose order on an otherwise irremediable chaos of public opinion and congressional desire. There have been serious abuses of executive power; but it remains difficult to see how the United States could conduct an effective foreign policy in the absence of a strong presidency, and it is silly to deny, as LaFeber implicitly does, that there were many occasions when presidential power was exercised for good purpose and unifying effect. At the outset of the national experiment, Washington performed this role. It is a common view among historians that his absence at the helm would have widened the divisive split in the Cabinet between Hamilton and Jefferson, and fractured the country's still precarious unity. Then as now, the power of the president has rested on his ability to rise above the fray, and to give by persuasion and comprehensive outlook a good ordering to the whole. These qualities, so important to the successful functioning of a democratic government, are never really glimpsed by LaFeber, whose portraits of the presidents are generally one-dimensional.

It comes as a surprise at the end of his book that LaFeber, who has sharply criticized the conduct that attended our rise to world power, should join the chorus of those warning of America's decline. Now that "the world's great moneybags between 1914 and 1970" is having trouble with its credit references, the old tide of expansion has reversed itself; a strong and relentless undertow has set in. "America's relative decline," he argues, "will not be stopped until many steps are taken. The first must be a coming to terms with history: what Americans wanted to be; how they built a continental, and then a worldwide, empire; why that power began to slip away; and what the consequences have been at home and abroad."

Reasonable people will disagree over the meaning of such a coming to terms with history. They will see in the huge canvas what they will. LaFeber's version lies in the recognition of historic misdeed, whether in broken promises to Indians, racial arrogance toward Latins and Asians, or self-deception in other matters great and small. All this rightly forms an important part of the American story. But the one-sided focus on the darker side of American history is no more satisfactory than that equally primitive version of American exceptionalism that found it to reside in our peculiar virtue and innocence. Both these fairy tales cloud the understanding. And neither is likely to be particularly helpful in stopping America's relative decline.

Of greater utility in this enterprise might be the recollection of the history of American diplomatic principle. The emphasis placed from the beginning on the principles of self-determination, non-intervention, and the balance of power is almost wholly lost in LaFeber's account. But they always played a central role in the classic tradition of reflection on American statecraft. The historic debate over these principles anticipates virtually every important problem in contemporary American foreign policy. These principles were sometimes honored in the breach. Their application to particular circumstances was always problematic. Often it was the political opposition that gave them their most telling expression, and that called us back to our true policy. Even so, it is a startling error for a historian of American diplomacy to neglect their importance, and to deny us the privilege of thinking that from their reconsideration we might gain a deeper sense of value and a longer view of time.

DAVID HENDRICKSON is the author of *The Future of American Strategy* (Holmes & Meier). His book, with Robert W. Tucker, on the statecraft of Thomas Jefferson will be published next spring by Oxford University Press.

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speeches about the sanctity of fetal—"pre-born," to use the preferred term—life. In 1984 he even "wrote" a "book" on the subject, *Abortion and the Conscience of the Nation*—a curious volume of 96 pages, with big type and big margins, and consisting of a 20-page Reagan essay bulked out with "afterwords" by C. Everett Koop and Malcolm Muggeridge. It was printed by a religious publishing house and distributed among the faithful. This sort of thing is calculated to keep the "pro-life" pot boiling while not unduly alarming the millions who disagree but vote Republican for other, seemingly more pressing reasons. That is why Reagan and his successor have deemed it advisable to give the "pro-lifers" little beyond rhetorical support, except in one area: the appointment of judges sympathetic to their cause.

These judicial chickens are now coming home to roost. If *Roe* v. *Wade* is junked, the "pro-choice" forces, diffident until last Sunday, will mobilize themselves as never before. The Republican presidential "lock" will suddenly be vulnerable, especially in the solid West, where bureaucratic meddling is little more welcome in personal than in economic matters. As long as abortion was safe and legal, it was a voting issue mostly for its opponents. That may be about to change.

Few subjects have been studied more exhaustively by pollsters and focus-group researchers than abortion, and all of them agree on the same general profile of public opinion. A vast majority of the citizenry thinks abortion should remain legal and the choice left to individual women and their doctors. An equally large, overlapping majority deplores the use of abortion as a routine substitute or backup for contraception. This would seem to arm both sides equally in a straight fight, but actually it favors the "pro-choicers," who can accommodate a variety of views about the morality of abortion itself without compromising their support for individual choice. The "pro-lifers," by contrast, are shut off from their most palatable arguments. Because they condemn all abortion without distinction, they are forever having to defend the criminalization of abortion even in such extreme circumstances as rape, incest, or potentially serious birth defect. They must therefore fight on precisely the ground where their popular appeal is weakest. And as the big march showed, the "pro-choice" side has found the right language to make its case, the language of liberty.

HENDRIK HERTZBERG

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Pillow Talk

I NEVER THOUGHT I'D FIND A KIND word for Michael Milken, but some comments by his detractors in a recent *New York Times* story come close to changing my mind. The occasion was the disclosure that Milken had "earned" $550 million in 1987. Retired Chase Manhattan Bank chairman David Rockefeller observed: "Such an extraordinary income inevitably raises questions as to whether there isn't something unbalanced in the structure of the way our financial system is working." Tell it to Grandpa, Dave. If John D. Rockefeller Sr. were alive today, he'd make Mike Milken look like St. Francis of Assisi. First place in the hypocrisy sweepstakes goes to Donald Trump. "You can be happy on a lot less money," said the man whose notion of happiness is a loaf of bread, a jug of wine, and Adnan Khashoggi's rickety old yacht. In contrast to both Rockefeller and Trump, Milken had to work to get his riches rather than inheriting them. That doesn't mean he did it all legally, or that he deserved $550 million a year. But please: let he who is without massive material acquisition cast the first stone.

SPEAKING OF MASSIVE MATERIAL acquisition, how about that Frank Lorenzo? It's a tribute to his high standards that he could come out of a deal several hundred million dollars ahead and still call it "not a profitable investment." True, it looks as if his battle with the unions at Eastern Airlines will end with the carrier's sale to Peter Ueberroth (who thus displaces Lee Iacocca as the businessman most likely to be considered a likely candidate for president). It's tempting, therefore, to think that the unions will "win." But Lorenzo will do much better than he likes to let on. He bought Eastern in 1986 for $620 million, of which he put up roughly $280 million in cash. The rest was money that Eastern borrowed ($108 million) or preferred stock that it issued ($232 million). When all was said and done, the deal ended up saddling the carrier with close to $500 million in new debt. Lorenzo next proceeded to bleed his new acquisition dry. First his Texas Air corporation borrowed $100 million from Eastern at the very generous interest rate of six percent, using the money to buy Eastern's valuable System 1 reservation network at about one-third of its actual worth. Tack on the $15 million a year management fee and $13 million a year gas fee charged Eastern by Texas Air. Add another $220 million that Texas Air borrowed from Eastern at low interest rates—including $16 million at no interest—which in turn forced the already debt-ridden Eastern to borrow $200 million at much higher market rates. Throw in some transfers of valuable routes and gate slots to Continental, and bargains on some Eastern planes, and you have a sizable in-house subsidy. And all this is before Texas Air receives $200 million in cash and $185 million in debt forgiveness and another $80 million in gate and route transfers from Ueberroth's investment group. That means Lorenzo stands to clear at *least* $200 million over his initial cash investment of $280 million. What will Eastern's workers get? They get rid of Lorenzo. And they get the chance to keep their jobs—for who knows how long—at an airline that Lorenzo overloaded with debt and stripped of assets.

THE SEARCH FOR SAFE SEX AND companionship in the '80s has reached new depths. "Remember what it was like to cuddle up at night with your Teddy Bear?" The picture accompanying this text in a Company Store catalog shows an attractive blonde in a chaste flannel nightgown, her arms and legs wrapped around an overstuffed long white pillow. "You just seemed to fall asleep faster and sleep more soundly then, didn't you?" Oh yes. The "Body Pillow" costs $139—in 100 percent cotton, with no moving parts.

BRUCE BABBITT DONE GOT RELIgion. During the 1988 Democratic primaries, Babbitt won big credibility points—but few votes—for his willingness to stand up and call for new taxes. But now, after having run for president on the idea that America could no longer postpone its day of financial reckoning, he is lobbying on behalf of four savings and loan associations, petitioning the Bush administration to postpone the strict accounting rules that will force his clients to put their own financial houses in order. Elsewhere on the that-was-then-this-is-now front, there's Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney's recent explanation of his Vietnam draft deferments: he "had other priorities in the '60s than military service." Cheney, who got only a light pasting for this, owes many thanks to Dan Quayle for exhausting the media's capacity for moral outrage over draft dodging. And while he's at it, he ought to buy John Tower a drink. Most reporters were too sapped by the Tower affair to gear up for another scandal, however slight. For that matter, I suppose, Tower has also done his fellow topers in the Senate a favor by setting the threshold for objectionable drinking at a level that few others will reach. Short of mainlining scotch on the Senate floor, just about anything will hereafter seem slight.

THE FRONT-PAGE STORIES IN THE *Washington Post* about crime and drugs in this city have bludgeoned me into numb despair. So it was a relief to stumble onto the "I Dream A World" exhibit at the Corcoran Museum last weekend. Photographer Brian Lanker has assembled portraits of 75 black women who radiate quiet hope and strength. What was even more inspiring was that the exhibit was packed, some weeks after its opening, with Americans of all sexes and colors. I'm waiting for the day, though, when Lanker puts together a comparable show that features 75 black men. Judging by the rites of passage that still prevail in Dodge City, it's sorely needed.

IN THEIR CRUSADE TO RID THE airwaves and reading racks of that which they don't approve, conservatives are fond of invoking the Lost World of Family Values. There's a good reason why that world seems lost: in many cases it never existed. Take the Rev. Donald Wildmon's complaints about the "excessive" sex and violence in the television miniseries "Lonesome Dove." "The demand for sex and violence . . . has always been there," Wildmon told the *Wall Street Journal*, "but for our nation's first 180 years or so, we had the good sense to keep it under wraps where it belongs. Until 1950, until television." This doesn't quite square with what I've been reading of our nation's past in Evan Connell's *Son of the Morning Star*, an enjoyable chronicle of Custer's demise at the Little Bighorn. Connell's book shows that public satisfaction of the appetite for gore, if not for glands, well predates television. In fact, if anything, "Lonesome Dove" is guilty of sanitizing the past. During one memorable show at a Denver theater, for example, 100 Cheyenne scalps were displayed while the audience, as one observer put it, "applauded rapturously." And when readers of the frontier press weren't treated to a story that mentioned, say, the "ravaging" of a white settler woman, they might thrill to a firsthand account of a scalping: "The Indian stepped one foot on my chest, and with his hand gathered up the hair near the crown of my head. . . . Suddenly I felt the awfulest biting, cutting flesh go on round my head, and then it seemed to me just as if my whole head had been jerked clean off." Yikes. You can keep the past, Reverend Wildmon. I'll take an eight-dollar unisex bowl trim any day.

JAMES S. GIBNEY

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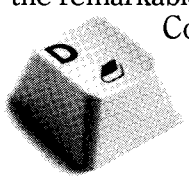
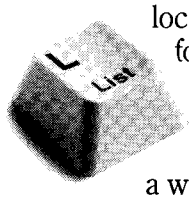
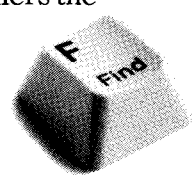


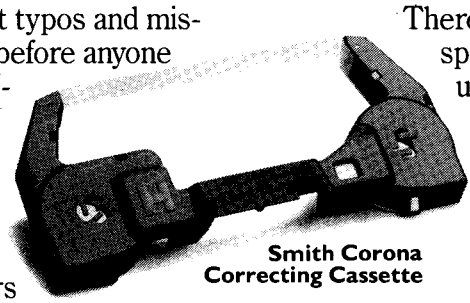
Detect typos and misspellings before anyone else does with the *Spell-Right*™ 75,000 word electronic dictionary. Tap *List* and it looks up the correct spelling.

One touch of *Find* locates errors for you. Once you locate those errors, *Word-Eraser*®/*LineEraser*™ erases a whole word or a whole line automatically. There are even 10 lines of automatic memory correction to make revisions simpler than ever.



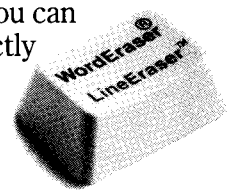
The XD 7500 also offers the exclusive Smith Corona fumble free *Correcting Cassette*. Just pop it in. There are no spools to unwind... no complicated threading... no tangles.





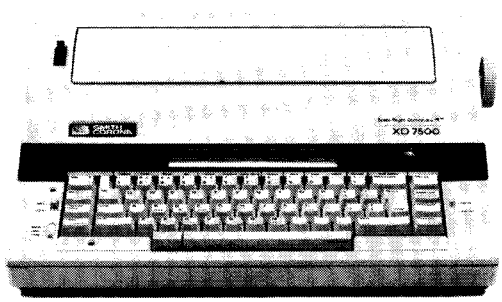
Smith Corona Correcting Cassette

Using the word processing features of the XD 7500 is also a breeze. You can type directly into its 12,000 character memory using the easy-to-read, 40 character display. Then you can proofread your typing, make changes, and print once everything's perfect.



Of course, the XD 7500 is made right here in the U.S.A.

So come see how easy it is to use the XD 7500. We're sure you'll be frilled.



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TOMORROW'S TECHNOLOGY AT YOUR TOUCH™

For more information on this product, write to Smith Corona Corporation, 65 Locust Avenue, New Canaan, CT 06840 or Smith Corona (Canada Ltd.), 440 Tapscott Road, Scarborough, Ontario, Canada M1B 1Y4.

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